

U.S. FOREIGN
POLICY TOWARDS
APARTHEID
SOUTH AFRICA,
1948–1994

Conflict of Interests

Alex Thomson



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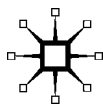
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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book has been in the making for over two decades. United States foreign policy toward apartheid South Africa has been a theme that I have returned to many times. My interest has been sustained by systematically working through different archives, and by concentrating on the ebb and flow of policies practiced by individual administrations. It has been a rewarding journey. Every library I have worked in seems to have revealed another nuance or twist in this particular portion of history. U.S. policy toward South Africa, although often confined to the backwoods of the decision making in Washington DC, was never dull. I hope that this book will convey to the reader some of the enjoyment that this research has given me over the years.

During this time I have accrued many debts. Without the assistance of staff in the archives visited, I would have been lost. I have found these archivists to be, collectively, some of the most helpful and informative professionals I have come across during my career. I thank them all. Similarly, I need to acknowledge the support of the U.K.'s Economic and Social Research Council which supported my early studies in this area, and my current employers, Coventry University, for funding more recent work in the presidential libraries. And then there are the regulars who help me each time to get a manuscript into shape. I would be struggling without the spell-check button, but even more embarrassed without my gallant proofreaders. Thank you.

Given that this is a theme that I have returned to several times, I should mention previous items I have published on this subject. These earlier stepping-stones have brought me to the point where I am now able to write the current survey covering the whole apartheid period. Those particularly interested in the Reagan period may wish to look at my more detailed book on this era *Incomplete Engagement*, and the accompanying article carried in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*.¹ Similarly an earlier sketch of chapter one of the present work was published in the journal *Politikon*, while my first attempt to put my disparate work into some kind of historical context can be found in *Studia Diplomatica*.²

The last task of this preface is to say something about the language I use in this book. In December 1976, South African black consciousness leader Steve Biko wrote the following words to Dick Clark, the chair of the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Africa: "We are looking forward to a non-racial, just and egalitarian society in which color, creed and race shall form no point of reference."³ Unfortunately, no

study of South Africa in the twentieth century can function without such points of reference. One inevitably has to refer to social groups defined by the color of their skin pigmentation. Throughout this book the term “white” refers to those individuals whose predecessors were most commonly European settlers; the phrase “African” relates to those people belonging to the mainly Bantu-speaking ethnic groups of South Africa; “coloreds” are those people in the Republic who were “legally” categorized as being of mixed descent; and “Indian” describes those individuals largely descendant from the Asian indentured laborers and traders who originally arrived in the country during the nineteenth century. These last three categories are collectively termed the Republic’s “black” population. The absence of inverted commas around these words, from this point onward, is for the sake of convenience, and in no way indicates support for this practice of racial categorization.

A.R.T

Manchester, 2008

INTRODUCTION

Africa, during the second half of the twentieth century, was not a priority for U.S. foreign policy. Senior Cold War strategists concentrated their efforts elsewhere. Whereas the memoirs of past presidents and former secretaries of state contain regular references to the Soviet Union, Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, the Middle East, and East-West relations generally, recollections of African issues are few and far between. Relations between United States and this part of the world tended to be managed lower down the foreign policy-making hierarchy. The continent was the preserve of specialist executive officials, and scrutinized by junior subcommittees of the U.S. Congress. Overall, African states were only a minor consideration within Washington DC's prosecution of the Cold War.

From time to time, African concerns did surface within the more lofty institutional planes of the executive. The Algerian war, the Biafran conflict, the secessionist struggles in the Congo, Angola's civil war, the Ethiopian revolution, and Zimbabwe's independence all drew top-level political interest within the United States. Yet, this interest was only temporary in nature. Cold War priorities determined that these officials soon removed their gaze from the continent, once the particular fire concerned had been doused, or had burnt itself out.

A partial exception to this reality was South Africa. Of all the African states, this country received the most consistent attention from the United States during the Cold War. The Union, and then later the Republic, rarely troubled principal U.S. officials during this period, but it did attract regular attention amongst low-to medium-level decision makers within the executive. This was as a consequence of Pretoria's ongoing program of institutionalized racism. South Africa's efforts to sustain, in the post-colonial era, a social system based on racial segregation drew widespread criticism. The result was *apartheid* remaining on the agenda of the international community for 46 years.

Indeed, apartheid presented the U.S. government with something of a conundrum. Washington DC had a number of concerns vis-à-vis South Africa that seemed largely irreconcilable. In many respects, the South African government appeared to be an ideal partner for the United States, helping it uphold its interests on the African continent. Aside from the Republic's strong

historical and cultural ties to the West, South Africa, in an era of bipolar Cold War, was also of some importance strategically and economically. The government in Pretoria presented itself as a bulwark against the spread of communism; it was located on the important Cape sea route, it possessed reserves of rare minerals, and it played host to numerous U.S. transnational corporations that found the South African market profitable.

Yet, these positive features were not the sole determinants of U.S. foreign policy toward South Africa. There remained the question of apartheid. No simple relationship of friendship, based on shared interests, could exist between the two governments as long as this program of social engineering endured. The very premise of apartheid attacked principles of freedom espoused by Washington DC, as well as aggravating the sensitivity of the United States to issues of race. In this sense, Pretoria's systematic abuse of the majority of its citizens' human rights conflicted directly with the strategic and economic opportunities identified above.

This book explores the foreign policy that emerged from efforts to balance these strategic, economic, and human rights concerns. It uses these three interests as a mechanism in order to chart the twists and turns of the U.S. response to apartheid. After an initial chapter defining, in greater detail, the nature of the three interests, the remainder of the book consists of a chronological analysis of just how U.S. officials attempted to register the U.S. opposition to apartheid, while at the same time maintaining mutually beneficial relations in the strategic and economic fields. In this respect, the South Africa policy of each administration, throughout the entire 46 years of apartheid, is examined in turn. Attention is paid to the different tactics adopted by successive executives, as well as the continuities that remained.

The following work is thus very much a traditional diplomatic history. It concentrates on policy formulation and implementation, reflecting on the ebb and flow of relations between Pretoria and Washington DC. Other equally valid approaches to this subject have therefore been passed over. The current book is not a history of the antiapartheid movement in the United States, it does not offer a detailed analysis on the utility of sanctions, nor does it specifically compare issues of race in the two states.¹ Similarly, the following chapters concentrate on U.S. policy toward South Africa itself, avoiding a detailed survey of the wider southern African region. This is not to say that these other considerations are totally ignored. The impact of the U.S. antiapartheid movement, the relevance of a parallel U.S. civil rights campaign, events in the broader southern African region, and the effect of sanctions, are all taken into account, but the analysis of these themes is limited, and only introduced to help explain the evolution of political relations between the two countries. Any attempt to cover all the above factors, in more detail, would have required a substantially longer book than the one produced here.

In terms of the policy itself, what is revealed in the following pages is that, over time, successive U.S. administrations struggled to balance strategic, economic, and human rights interests with respect to South Africa. The general trend was for the United States to gradually reduce its strategic links with Pretoria in an effort to reinforce the stand being made on human rights. Whereas Truman

and Eisenhower actively sought Cold War cooperation with Pretoria, later administrations kept their distance. The core symbol of U.S. disquiet was the imposition of an arms embargo from 1964 onward. Strategic interests were therefore sacrificed as human rights concerns became more prominent.

Yet, even with human rights increasingly to the fore, no administration was able to find a lasting formula to balance all three groups of interests. Nixon, Ford, and Reagan all tried to win influence with Pretoria via positive sanctions, whilst Carter pursued a more confrontational route. Neither approach resulted in significant reforms of apartheid. In the final analysis, the troika of interests always restricted the South Africa policy of the United States. There was a constant throughout the apartheid era that successive administrations continued to pursue all three interests simultaneously. As a consequence, neither positive nor punitive sanctions were taken to their logical conclusion. Comprehensive economic sanctions were not imposed in the name of boosting human rights in the region. Similarly, strategic and economic links were not expanded significantly, by way of offering positive sanctions, because of these same human rights concerns. All the administrations, in this respect, failed to wrestle free from this straitjacket of irreconcilable but compelling interests.

Eventually it took the U.S. Congress to untie the three factors. The Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Bill of 1986, enacted over President Reagan's veto, for the first time significantly curtailed U.S. economic relations with South Africa. With the United States now having reduced both its strategic and economic interest in the Republic, this gave executive officials much more freedom with which to respond to F.W. de Klerk's more liberal regime from 1989 onward. U.S. policy had thus completed its transition from the strategic priorities of the 1940s and 1950s, through an unshakable commitment to economic engagement in the 1960s, 1970s, and earlier 1980s, to a position where U.S. officials could now assist the negotiations process that would lead to the abandonment of apartheid and the creation of the new South Africa in 1994.

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CHAPTER 1

A BALANCING ACT: KEY U.S. INTERESTS AND APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

U.S. foreign policy toward South Africa was always going to be a balancing act. Different interests were pulling in different directions. Initially, policy makers in Washington DC took notice of this relatively minor state on the southern tip of Africa because of its strategic value and its overtly anticommunist credentials. Pretoria played on these concerns, attempting to make itself an indispensable partner in the primary U.S. foreign policy objective: the global containment of communism. The economic benefits of maintaining good relations with South Africa similarly pushed U.S. policy makers into friendly relations. Yet, Pretoria was never able to achieve its goal of integrating itself fully into the economies or security alliances of the West. The Union's (later the Republic's) domestic policy of racial differentiation prevented the United States from embracing Pretoria too closely in these roles.

By way of contextualizing the following chapters of this book, the current chapter concerns itself with the whole 1948 to 1994 apartheid era. It identifies key groups of interests that successive U.S. administrations had to juggle when it came to South Africa. In this respect, three primary policy determinants are analyzed in turn: strategic calculations, economic opportunities, and human rights concerns. From Truman, all the way through to Bush, these were the three key competing considerations that each administration constantly had to balance. As it will be shown in later chapters, over time, changes in circumstances and attitudes made the relationship between the three interests dynamic, with their relative value ebbing and flowing. However, none of these interests completely lost its utility to the United States. Indeed, each remained highly relevant throughout the whole apartheid era. The reasons behind the persistence of this relevance are explained below.

U.S. Strategic Interests in South Africa

In 1939, on the eve of World War II, the United States of America had no military alliances, no troops stationed abroad, and a defense budget of less than

US\$500 million per annum. Forty years on, a different strategy of foreign policy had drawn Washington DC into 50 alliances worldwide, and had created a massive standing army of awesome capability funded by some US\$300 billion per annum.¹ World War II had changed the attitude of many Americans toward international affairs. New threats, real and perceived, encouraged Washington DC to operate a foreign policy that met modern threats to American sovereignty “early and overseas.”²

At the hub of U.S. foreign policy in the postwar years was Washington DC’s desire to contain communism. With the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, the commitment of U.S. troops to the Korean War, and by waging a counterinsurgency war in South East Asia for more than a decade, the United States protected its security interests worldwide. Secretary of State Dean Acheson described the strategy of this time as having the “central aim and purpose” to “maintain as spacious an environment as possible in which free states might exist and flourish. Its method was common action with like-minded states to secure and enrich the environment and to protect one another from predators through mutual aid and joint effort.”³ The United States now sought to maintain its security through active involvement with countries it had previously regarded as too remote for such attention.

Although always on the periphery of Washington DC’s global strategic calculations, South Africa proved a useful ally during the Cold War. From 1945, through to the 1980s, the government in Pretoria proved to be a secure enemy of communism. South Africa stood out as a stable country at the tip of a continent of uncertainty. Africa as a whole was passing from a Western sphere of influence to a nonaligned status, via the process of decolonization. On gaining independence, many of these former colonies began to espouse ideologies alien to the political ideals favored in Washington DC. By contrast, South Africa remained steadfast as an outpost of the capitalist system. In this respect, the government in Pretoria was an ideal partner for the United States. Its government’s military and economic hegemony over southern Africa could help prevent Marxist-Leninism gaining a foothold within this region. The South African government was also willing to commit its own resources to this end.

Indeed, U.S. strategists had to look no further than the internal political situation in South Africa to confirm the value of a white government in Pretoria. After their banning in 1960, the Republic’s liberation movements turned to an armed struggle, with the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) accepting material aid from the Soviet Union, and its allies to do this. Such an alliance and the ANC’s socialist outlook meant U.S. officials had to question what form of government would replace the pro-Western establishment in Pretoria should majority rule become a reality.⁴ There was also the matter of the ANC’s main ally in its liberation struggle: the South African Communist Party (SACP). The structures of these two organizations were substantially interlinked. In the prevailing climate of the Cold War, it was not difficult to assume a path running from the ANC, through the SACP, straight to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Indeed, Michael Radu, writing in the State Department’s journal *Problems of Communism*, was to argue that, due to these contacts with Moscow, the African

National Congress had been transformed from a “nationalist organization dedicated to the pursuit of civil and political rights” to a vanguard socialist movement “with strong Marxist-Leninist elements.” The ANC, he concluded, was a communist movement “in its political goals, and an ally of the USSR in its geopolitical aims.”⁵ By comparison, whatever Washington DC thought of the racial policies of the South African government, it could not fault Pretoria in its commitment to prevent “communists” from coming to power in the Republic, or anywhere else in the region.

It was not just Pretoria’s ideological stance against communism that endeared it to Washington DC; its geographical location also increased this state’s value. “A plain question deserves a plain answer: South Africa is of great strategic importance, whatever one’s point of view,” wrote Richard Bissell in answer to his own question posed in a paper entitled *How Strategic is South Africa?*⁶ This conclusion was based on the knowledge that the Republic supplied strategically important minerals to the Western world, alongside this state’s proximity to the busy sea-lane off the Cape of Good Hope.

For centuries, sailors had recognized the safe anchorage and the opportunity to replenish ships’ stocks that False Bay and Table Bay provided on the Cape. By the seventeenth century, vessels regularly stopped in these bays en route from the West to the Indian colonies. The Dutch East India Company in 1652, dispatching Jan van Riebeeck with three ships, formalized this arrangement, introducing the first European settlers to southern Africa. Just over a hundred and fifty years later, the Cape’s strategic value was recognized by Britain when its forces, during the Napoleonic wars, took control of Cape Town. British sovereignty was confirmed in the European treaties of 1815, and a naval base was established at nearby Simonstown.

After World War II, the importance of the route switched to being a path of access to the oil reserves of the Middle East. This significance was enhanced with the closure of the Suez Canal between 1967 and 1975. The growing trend was for supertankers to transport the lion’s share of Western oil imports via this maritime highway around the Cape of Good Hope. In 1980, such tankers supplied 65 percent of Western Europe’s, and 28 percent of U.S. oil consumption.⁷ The Cape, with shipping being funneled close to the African coast by the surrounding land-masses and the rough seas of the Roaring Forties to the south, thus became a congestion area, or choke point. Some 2,300 vessels passed within a few miles of Cape Town every month.⁸

These factors led strategic analysts to claim that this Cape traffic was vulnerable to Soviet interference, suggesting that South Africa was the natural agent to protect Western shipping from this threat. Former U.S. naval officer, Robert J. Hanks, for example, in his book *The Cape Route: Imperiled Western Lifeline*, stated: “The importance of the Cape Route to the industrialized nations of the Free World must be taken as a given. There is little room for argument with this thesis.”⁹

The strategic screw was turned further in 1968 when the Soviet navy started to patrol the Indian Ocean in strength. The permanent deployment of between 15 to 30 warships and auxiliary craft prompted a flurry of interest amongst

concerned strategists and politicians. Air Vice-Marshal S.W.B. Menaul, for example, pointed to the ports of Simonstown and Durban in 1972 and argued: "NATO members must, in the near future, take advantage of these facilities so in co-operation with South African maritime forces they may jointly provide the security which these vital sea lanes demand."¹⁰ Senior U.S. Navy staff agreed with Menaul's assessment. Admiral John McCain, a former commander in chief for the Pacific, believed: "we absolutely need access to the South African facilities at Simonstown and Durban."¹¹ The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) also showed concern over the "Increasing Soviet naval capability" in this area.¹² Indeed, the belief that Washington DC should foster closer ties with Pretoria, in order to defend the Cape Route, reached as high as the Secretary-General of NATO, with Joseph Luns in the early 1970s advocating South Africa's inclusion within the alliance's defense perimeter.¹³ The Republic's staunch anticommunist credentials, its excellent ports, and the fact that it already unilaterally monitored traffic rounding the Cape of Good Hope had succeeded in creating a favorable impression amongst U.S. foreign policy officials.

The South African government was also a custodian of large mineral resources important to the United States. Despite occupying just one percent of the Earth's land surface, South Africa during this period was the fourth largest exporter of nonfuel minerals.¹⁴ In 1975, for example, the Republic was the leading supplier of the world's gold, platinum group metals, vanadium and antimony; it ranked second in the supply of both chrome and manganese ore; and third in the production of diamonds, uranium, and asbestos.¹⁵ Andalusite, cobalt, and rutile were also prominent in the inventory of this storehouse of the world's minerals.¹⁶ The reliable supply of these materials was seen as a vital and integral part of the American industrial machine. Consequently, South Africa came to be regarded as the "Persian Gulf of non-fuel minerals."¹⁷

Of these minerals, four types stood out as being of considerable strategic value: chromium, manganese, vanadium, and the platinum group metals (specifically, palladium, rhodium, ruthenium, iridium, and osmium). Without chromium, the U.S. steel making industry could not produce corrosion resistant alloys of high strength, properties demanded by the armaments trade. Manganese, also used in the steel industry, had no "known satisfactory substitute" to defuse and deoxidize iron. Likewise, lightweight vanadium was widely used in the production of aircraft, notably in the making of jet engines and airframes. The platinum group metals were vital for electrical products and as catalysts in the petrochemical business.¹⁸

The United States traditionally looked to South Africa to supply a large proportion of these four minerals. In 1974, for example, 57 percent of U.S. vanadium needs, 36 percent of its ferromanganese, 35 percent of its ferrochrome, 30 percent of its chrome ore, and 19 percent of U.S. platinum group metals requirements were met by South African suppliers. Washington DC had also to consider the welfare of its allies. Unlike the United States, which could boast a degree of self-sufficiency with respect to these materials, Western Europe and Japan had to import the vast majority of their mineral requirements.¹⁹

The level of dependence of the United States and its allies on this one country for these four minerals had strategic implications. What if this access to South

Table 1.1 Percentage share of world chromium, manganese, platinum group metals, and vanadium production and reserves, by country, 1979

<i>Mineral</i>	<i>United States</i>	<i>South Africa</i>	<i>Soviet Union</i>	<i>Soviet Union plus South Africa</i>
Chromium:				
production	0.00	33.0	24.5	57.5
reserves	0.00	66.4	2.90	69.3
Manganese:				
production	0.00	20.9	45.8	66.7
reserves	0.00	37.2	50.7	87.9
Platinum Group:				
production	0.10	47.5	47.5	95.0
reserves	0.10	73.2	25.1	98.3
Vanadium:				
production	17.6	42.3	27.9	70.2
reserves	0.70	49.4	45.9	95.3

Source: U.S. Department of the Interior. Bureau of Mines. *Mineral Commodity Summaries 1980*. Washington DC: Department of the Interior, 1980. 34–35, 96–97, 118–119, and 178–179.

African materials was interrupted? The concerns of U.S. policy makers were compounded by the possible alternative sources of supply. The Soviet Union controlled the bulk of the world's remaining reserves of chromium, manganese, vanadium, and the platinum group metals (see table 1.1).

In 1979, Scott Thompson and Brett Silvers wrote that, "Russia's Africa policy is not driven by its own resource needs, but rather those of NATO ..." ²⁰ After all, had not a Soviet major-general, A.N. Lagovsky, devised the "weak link principle" in the 1950s? Lagovsky had theorized that the Western economies could be seriously disrupted by denying them minerals mined in southern Africa. ²¹ Such concerns led Anthony Harrigan, the vice president of the U.S. Industrial Council, to declare in 1976 that "If the Soviets are successful in detaching these resources [from the Western economies] they will have struck a massive, possibly devastating blow to the West, [giving] the Soviet totalitarian order a bigger boost than any other it has enjoyed in its history." ²²

This style of reasoning led the U.S. Congress to pass legislation in 1971 violating United Nations sanctions in place against Rhodesia. The Byrd Amendment permitted U.S. imports of chrome from this territory as an alternative to relying on Soviet supplies. This was despite Rhodesia having unilaterally declared its independence from the United Kingdom, and being ruled by an illegal white minority-rule government. ²³ Senator Robert Byrd had persuaded his colleagues that, when it came to securing supplies of these minerals, strategic interests outweighed human rights concerns.

Throughout the apartheid era, South Africa was a state willing to assist in the containment of communism. It was also a country located on one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, and it could supply relatively rare minerals that the West needed for its industrial economies. These strategic considerations, given

the international political environment of the Cold War, remained foremost in foreign policy officials' minds when they considered their strategy toward South Africa. If the United States chose to impose a more robust policy, challenging the South African government's racial policies, these strategic benefits would be threatened.

U.S. Economic Interests in South Africa

The expansion of the U.S. economy into the world market during the second half of the twentieth century was phenomenal. In this respect, the value of exports, shown as a percentage of the U.S. gross national product, doubled between 1945 and 1980, while imports quadrupled in this same period. U.S. foreign investment was also to increase dramatically. Total American direct investment abroad measured US\$11,788 million in 1950. By 1980, this sum had risen almost twenty-fold to US\$215,375 million.²⁴ The reality of the U.S. transnational corporation (TNC) flying the flag for the United States in virtually every part of the world had come of age. American corporate activities in South Africa proved no exception.

The first significant economic contacts between Americans and the Cape Colony occurred when American ships began transporting slaves from Madagascar in the 1680s. The crews welcomed the Dutch East India Company's repair and victualling facilities at Cape Town. In the following century, a new generation of American ships were attracted to the region by pods of whales off Walvis Bay and in the Mozambique Channel.²⁵ Regular trade, if small in volume, was conducted between the United States and South Africa in the first six decades of the nineteenth century. U.S. ships brought tobacco, wheat, and lumber products to the colonies, returning with ostrich feathers, wine, and Asian reexports.²⁶ Wool and hides were perhaps the most valuable commodities traded between the countries at this time.²⁷

Bilateral economic contacts between the United States and South Africa, however, did not reach significant levels until diamonds were discovered in Kimberley during the 1860s, and gold on the Rand 10 years later. American citizens and companies played a large role in the southern African minerals revolution. Several thousand experienced miners emigrated from the United States to work the South African diamond pipes and gold reefs. Californians, for example, managed half of the mines on the Witwatersrand in 1896, while American engineers were prominent throughout the Transvaal at this time.²⁸ From such positions of power, these Americans passed on contracts to U.S. companies working this market. The Ingersoll Rock Drill Company (later Ingersoll-Rand), amongst other U.S. firms, sold heavy machinery to the mines, General Electric supplied the generators to light the shafts, while John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil Corporation provided the fuel. Americans were even prominent in managing prostitution within the Transvaal's mining settlements.²⁹

Comprehensive U.S. TNC investment in South Africa took off during the 1920s and 1930s. The American automotive and petroleum industries formed the vanguard of this new economic penetration. By 1920, the Union represented

the fifth largest export market for the U.S. automotive industry. Ford of South Africa was formed in 1923, with its own assembly plant in Port Elizabeth, to tap this market. General Motors followed Ford's initiative in 1926, and the Firestone Tire Company arrived in the 1930s. As the U.S. consulate in Cape Town observed earlier in the 1920s: "There are splendid openings here ... for energetic men with sufficient capital to finance the undertaking and employ the large forces of cheap native labor found in most parts. ... American capital could be put to splendid use here in the interests of American trade."³⁰ Coca-Cola, Johnson and Johnson, Colombia Records, Metro Goldwyn Mayer, and Colgate-Palmolive had all established subsidiaries in South Africa by 1940.³¹

U.S. economic interests were similarly well served in South Africa during the postwar period (see table 1.2). Building on the historical foundation described above, and taking advantage of the South African government's pro-capitalist, liberal attitudes toward foreign investment, both the Union and Republic proved an excellent environment for transnational corporations to operate in. Although South Africa as a destination for U.S. exports during these years remained relatively constant, at between 1 and 2 percent of total U.S. worldwide exports, the Republic had little problem in absorbing its share of the rapidly expanding output from the U.S. economy. Exports to South Africa rose from US\$131 million in 1945 to US\$2,463 million by 1980. Imports from South Africa to the United States followed a similar pattern, registering US\$104 million at the end of the war, and US\$3,321 million by 1980. It was the investment sector, however, that benefited most from this easy access to the South African market. In 1950, the book value of U.S. private investment in the Union measured US\$140 million; this had risen to US\$2,350 million by 1980.³²

Table 1.2 U.S. economic relations with South Africa (exports, imports, and direct investment), 1950–1990

Year	Total U.S. exports to South Africa (US\$ millions)	Total U.S. imports from South Africa (US\$ millions)	U.S. total direct investment in South Africa (US\$ millions)	Return on U.S. total direct investment in South Africa (percentage)
1950	126	142	140	9.29
1955	268	96	257	14.79
1960	288	108	286	11.89
1965	438	226	528	14.58
1970	536	290	868	16.60
1975	1,302	840	1,582	4.49
1980	2,463	3,321	2,350	28.30
1985	1,205	2,071	1,394	2.51
1990	1,732	1,698	775	21.03

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. *Historical statistics of the United States colonial times to 1957*. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1960; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. *Statistical Abstract of the United States*. Annual editions: 1963, 1974, 1985, 1990, 1993. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1963, 1974, 1984, 1990, 1993; and U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. *Survey of Current Business*. 1956, 36(8), 19 and 23; 1961, 41(8), 22–23; 1966, 46(9), 34–35; 1972, 52(11), 30; 1977, 57(8), 44 and 50; 1984, 64(11), 24–25; 1986, 66(8), 70; and 1994, 74(8), 134.

The primary attraction of the South African market for U.S. transnational corporations was the returns they gained on their investments. These averaged 13.72 percent in the period between 1950 and 1990, for example, while average worldwide U.S. investment netted only 11.2 percent during this same period.³³ A particularly strong area of the South African economy was its mining industry. It was a country that, in the words of one American corporate director, “makes U.S. mining companies’ mouths water.”³⁴ In this sector, returns on investment consistently outperformed similar investments in the rest of the world. Money risked in the Republic produced an average return of 30 percent between 1950 and 1980, double the figure made by U.S. mining companies in Latin America and the Caribbean, and quadruple the amount netted in Canada.³⁵ Due to this profitability, whether in the mining sector or elsewhere, 57 percent of *Fortune’s* wealthiest 500 U.S. industrial companies could be found investing directly in the South African economy by 1980.³⁶

The profits that U.S. business could extract from the South African economy and the number of top U.S. firms that enjoyed operating in this environment became a major consideration for administrations formulating foreign policy toward this country. Any form of punitive measures, designed to challenge Pretoria over its apartheid policy, risked damaging U.S. economic interests in this country, as well as exacting a political cost amongst corporate representatives at home.

U.S. Interests and Human Rights in South Africa

A major theme of U.S. foreign policy in the postwar years was the attempt of successive administrations to promote American values abroad. “There are those who will say that the liberation of humanity, the freedom of man and mind, is nothing but a dream. They are right. It is the American dream.”³⁷ These words of Archibald MacLeish serve to highlight the liberal tradition that can be found at the very heart of U.S. society.³⁸ It is a tradition that can be traced all the way back to the founding document of the United States. The 1776 *Declaration of Independence* states: “all men are created equal” with “certain unalienable rights,” who have the “right” and “duty” to throw off “destructive” government. The United States wrote a constitution and Bill of Rights to enshrine these values in law.

With such a strong domestic political tradition of liberty and equality, it is hardly surprising that these values should find their way into U.S. foreign policy. Dexter Perkins, in his study of the *American Approach to Foreign Policy*, argued that it is “fair to say that there is a highly moralistic flavor to our diplomacy as compared with other nations.” He gives the example of President Woodrow Wilson’s belief, found in his Fourteen Points and the Versailles Treaty, that “The world must be made safe for democracy.”³⁹ Indeed, similar rhetoric was repeated regularly throughout the twentieth century. President Franklin D. Roosevelt talked of “four freedoms” (the freedom of expression, religion, from economic privation, and fear of aggression); the United States, together with the United Kingdom, penned the Atlantic Charter during World War II advocating self-determination;

and the Cold War found Washington DC consistently advocating the expansion of freedom and democracy throughout the world (whilst criticizing the authoritarianism of the Soviet Union). It is certainly the case that advocates of "realism" tempered the practical application of these beliefs in postwar U.S. foreign policy, but there is no denying that, in the words of Richard Cooper and Joseph Nye, "Neither politics nor morality really stops at the water's edge. They just become more complicated . . . Given the nature of American political culture, there will always be a demand for moral expression in foreign policy."⁴⁰

Given this demand, the relationship between the United States and South Africa could never be a simple friendship between two states committed to the containment of communism and the development of a capitalist commerce. Apartheid prevented this. No amount of realist reasoning could ignore Pretoria's audacious attempt at social engineering. As the postwar era progressed, the fact that black South Africans were being denied basic human rights increasingly poisoned relations between the two countries.

The National Party in South Africa was elected to power in 1948. Over the next 40 years, practicing overt and legalized racism, this government attempted to separate the lives of black and white South Africans by means of parliamentary legislation and aggressive policing. Legislation prior to 1948 had already limited the land Africans could purchase and restricted them to certain types of labor, but apartheid was about consolidating this position and separating the population groups comprehensively. In a tidal wave of legislation during the late 1940s and early 1950s, marriage and sexual relations between individuals of different race became illegal (1949 Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, followed by the 1950 Immorality Act); all South Africans were designated an official racial identity (1950 Population Registration Act); population groups had their residence limited to allocated geographical zones (1950 Group Areas Act); black "citizens" were required to carry passes stating their official racial categorization and outlining where they were permitted to be (the perversely named 1952 Abolition of Passes and Consolidation of Documents Act); the races were kept apart in public spaces and on public transport (1952 Reservation of Separate Amenities Act); the education system was segregated (1953 Bantu Education Act); and a security apparatus was put in place to enforce this social engineering (1950 Suppression of Communism Act). The objective of the Afrikaner government was to make it a crime for any meaningful relationship to exist between black and white individuals.

Later, this "separate development" became even more comprehensive with "petty apartheid" moving on to "grand apartheid." The objective now was to consolidate the territorial segregation of the races. The logical conclusion of grand apartheid would be that all Africans would live in their own independent states with their own governments. Such individuals would only be permitted to live and work in "white" South Africa if they were of benefit to the white economy, and even then these people would be present as temporary guests only, having no political rights within white South Africa. The 1970 Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act, to this end, assigned all Africans a homeland. According to their ethnic origin, each of these individuals was required to live in a certain territory

defined by the government (unless gainfully employed in the white economy). Mass "removals" of whole communities accompanied this legislation.

The theory of apartheid attempted to reconcile Afrikaner nationalist power with a notion of justice. The idea was that apartheid was giving black South Africans what the Afrikaner demanded for him- or her-self: self-determination, and a right to develop their own culture. In reality, however, apartheid merely amounted to exploitation, hardship, and human rights abuses on a massive scale. Simple mathematics made apartheid impossible. An equal chance of development was not possible when 75 percent of the population was shoehorned into the homelands, which territorially amounted only to 13 percent of the Republic's territory. Steve Biko, the black consciousness leader, called these homelands "sophisticated concentration camps."⁴¹ Statistics support his view. The health comparisons are quite appalling. In 1950, white South Africans lived some 23 years longer than their African compatriots. At the other end of life, white infant mortality measured 3.6 percent compared to 20 percent for African children.⁴² Then there was the question of employment. The majority of work was to be found on the prime agricultural land and the urban industrial areas of prosperous white South Africa, forcing most African workers to live apart from their families for months at a time. Even then there was a color bar ensuring that whites earned, on average, up to twenty times more than Africans.⁴³

As the full extent of the consequences of apartheid became known to the outside world, it became difficult for the international community to ignore the South African government's program of legislation. Made all the more stark by the obvious contrast between black and white levels of wealth and poverty, the systematic abuse and exploitation of the majority population by its own government put the issue of apartheid squarely on the agenda of world politics.

Apartheid also had a particular resonance for the United States because of tensions in its own domestic racial relations. In a country where slavery had been a prominent factor in the fighting of a civil war in the nineteenth century, and where African Americans were now mobilizing to claim their civil rights, U.S. officials had to be sensitive to the domestic ramifications of how they dealt with South Africa. It should be noted that at the same time the National Party was pushing through its petty apartheid legislation, several southern states in the United States itself still excluded African Americans from the franchise, the Ku Klux Klan continued to terrorize the black community, and southern Dixiecrats were determined to keep "their way of life" just as much as whites were in South Africa. Lynchings and racial violence persisted in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s.

Responding to this inequality, the civil rights movement made progress throughout the period under consideration. Events such as the landmark *Brown vs. the Board of Education*, *Topeka* 1954 Supreme Court decision and the Montgomery bus boycott sensitized politicians to the issue of race within their own country. Similarly, the federal government, however hesitantly, came to support the issue of civil rights, most notable with the deployment of troops at Little Rock during 1957, and with the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act. The foreign policy agenda had to follow this lead, and South Africa, on the occasions

it did catch the public imagination in the United States, became linked with the U.S. domestic racial struggle.

If Washington DC needed any further reminder of its human rights interests in South Africa, beyond this domestic resonance, the United Nations similarly highlighted the issue of apartheid throughout the second half of the twentieth century. A powerful bloc of Third World countries, emerging from the decolonization process, bearing the scars of colonialism and racism themselves, consistently put forward their view in this forum that the international community ought to act against apartheid. Resolutions tabled by these states repeatedly forced the United States to take a public stand on the issue. Whereas, there were only three African, three Asian, and seven Middle Eastern states amongst the founding members of the U.N. in 1945, the acceleration of decolonization throughout the 1950s and 1960s saw membership of this newly independent nonaligned group expand rapidly and form a majority in the General Assembly. This majority was used to highlight the antiapartheid cause. South Africa's racial relations became a permanent feature of the U.N. agenda, with resolutions, from the 1950s onward, calling for punitive sanctions to be imposed.

Moreover, it was not just over apartheid that a majority within the U.N. General Assembly sought to implement sanctions. The issue of Namibia (South West Africa) also angered this body's nonaligned bloc. Namibia has a complicated colonial past. Originally a German protectorate, South West Africa passed into the League of Nations' jurisdiction after the South African Defense Force defeated German troops in this colony during World War I. South Africa received a mandate to administer the territory, on behalf of the British government, as part of the Versailles Treaty. The conflict between the United Nations and South Africa over this mandate began in 1946, when the U.N. requested that South West Africa be made a Trust Territory of the new body. Pretoria declined this invitation to relinquish its control, claiming that the U.N. had no power to alter a mandate issued by the League of Nations. There followed a protracted series of legal and political arguments to establish South West Africa's international status. It was not until the second half of the 1960s, however, that the U.N. collectively acted. The General Assembly, in October 1966, unilaterally terminated South Africa's mandate, later setting up a Council for South West Africa with executive powers to administer the territory.⁴⁴ This 1966 resolution was then endorsed by the Security Council in August 1969, and confirmed by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in 1971.⁴⁵ The period 1971 to 1990 saw a series of U.N.-sponsored negotiating initiatives with Pretoria attempting to translate this legal independence for Namibia into actual self-determination from South African rule. Continuing to administer the territory, Pretoria, in the meantime, experimented with its own internal settlement for Namibia.

Just as with apartheid, the international community's dispute with South Africa over South West Africa/Namibia, throughout the whole period under consideration, forced Washington DC to take a very public position on an issue it preferred to play down. The United States consistently had to balance demonstrating its respect for international law and human rights with its strategic and economic interests in southern Africa. To varying degrees, as it will be

shown, administrations over time sought to protect their South African ally on this issue.

The strategic and economic interests of the United States should have resulted in a close relationship between the U.S. and South Africa in the second half of the twentieth century. Pretoria's anticommunist stance, its commitment to a liberal trading and investment environment, South Africa's location on the Cape sea route, and its reserves of important minerals key to the U.S. economy proved to be prominent defining features in Washington DC's contacts with this country. Yet, the U.S. commitment to democracy and human rights worldwide demanded a tough response to apartheid. Not only did this demand arise from a moral, abstract, abhorrence of racial oppression, the United States also had to address this issue because of its own domestic legacy of racial discrimination and the accompanying civil rights campaign, and the fact that, even as a superpower, U.S. policy makers had to be sensitive to the emergence of an African Asian nonaligned bloc accompanying the end of European colonial rule. The following chapters chart how each individual U.S. administration, when it came to South Africa, attempted to reconcile these conflicting strategic, economic, and human rights interests.

CHAPTER 2

“MUTUAL COOPERATION” AND “SERIOUS CONCERN”: THE TRUMAN AND EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATIONS, 1948–1961

U.S. foreign policy in 1948 had as its single most important focus the prosecution of the Cold War. The introduction of the Truman Doctrine had signaled U.S. intent. The Marshall Plan was devised to shore up the economies of Western Europe, the Berlin airlift undertaken, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) established. The commitment to a broader containment strategy came in 1950, when the United States intervened militarily in the Korean War. From this point on, the Cold War was truly global in extent.

Compared to this priority of containment, the 1948 general election in South Africa had minimal impact in Washington DC. This poll, which brought the National Party to power, registered only with those directly charged with monitoring the Union of South Africa. Few other Americans took notice of this election. Analysts failed to predict that the National Party's accession to power, with its accompanying apartheid policies, would become one of the most contentious and intractable diplomatic issues of the second half of the twentieth century.

Remembering that South African forces had fought side by side with U.S. troops in World War II, and noting that the National Party leader Prime Minister Daniel Malan was “thoroughly alert to the threat to the free world emanating from Moscow,” both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations were well disposed toward Pretoria.¹ Diplomacy based on friendly cooperation followed. A 1949 Central Intelligence Agency assessment of U.S. interests in this country reported several interlocking facts: that the Union was the only state of “substantial power and stability” on the African continent south of the Sahara; that it enjoyed good ports and naval facilities on the Cape sea route, which were readily available to U.S. shipping; that the country's mines produced 12 of the 23 strategic minerals deemed so important to the United States that their stockpiling was “essential”; that South Africa was able to supply the United States with viable quantities of uranium; and that, politically, “the Union's orientation is unquestionably towards the West.”²

South Africa was thus seen as a useful, if not essential, ally for the United States in the early Cold War. As President Eisenhower declared, "As there is no weapon too small, no arena too remote to be ignored, there is no free nation too humble to be forgotten."³ Consequently, according to a 1948 State Department policy summary, the "fundamental objectives of U.S. policy toward the Union of South Africa are: (1) to maintain and develop the friendly relations which exist between the United States and the Union of South Africa; (2) to encourage the maintenance of South African bonds of sympathy with the western powers and continued participation in the United Nations; and (3) the economic development of South Africa and the growth of its foreign trade ..."⁴ To this end, the United States and South Africa mutually agreed to upgrade their diplomatic representation to full embassy status soon after the National Party had come to power.⁵

This chapter demonstrates how both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations attempted to "maintain and develop" these desired "friendly relations" with South Africa. The first two sections of the chapter respectively highlight how U.S. policy makers concentrated on offering the National Party government both strategic cooperation and economic assistance. However, even at this early stage of dealing with apartheid, Washington DC did not completely ignore the issue of the Union's human rights. As it will be demonstrated in the third section of the chapter, both administrations expressed their concerns over Pretoria's racial policies as the 1950s progressed. In particular, the United States was forced to take a position in the United Nations. Eventually, at the end of this period, prompted by the 1960 Sharpeville shootings, the United States took a critical line against the South African government. Events leading to, and the fallout from, this incident prompting a relative downturn in the bilateral relations between the two countries are the subject of the fourth and final section of the chapter.

Strategic Cooperation

In 1949, the South African Defense Minister, F.C. Erasmus, concluded an official visit to the United States by commenting: "I leave the United States with great encouragement that the strategic importance of South Africa as one of the far-flung bastions of democracy is well understood by our American friends."⁶ Similarly, General Len Beyers, the Chief of Staff to the Union Defense Force, confided to his American counterparts that "we get along so well with you people that we don't have to beat around the bush."⁷ The United States and South Africa enjoyed a good strategic relationship under the Truman and Eisenhower administrations. South Africa made its ports and airfields available to U.S. forces, supplied personnel to fight against communist forces worldwide, and provided vital minerals to the U.S. armaments industry. In return, the Union received military equipment and training, alongside infrastructure investment designed to assist the efficient export of strategic minerals.

The most obvious element of this strategic cooperation was the fact that the Union of South Africa, demonstrating its commitment to defend the "free world," deployed military personnel to both the Berlin Airlift of 1948–1949

and the 1950–1953 Korean War. The South African Air Force (SAAF) flew some 1,200 missions to Berlin, delivering over four thousand tons of supplies to this city during its siege, while, in Korea, the Second Squadron of the SAAF provided ground attack support and interdiction missions as part of the U.S. Air Force Eighteenth Fighter-Bomber Wing.⁸

On the other side of the world, the U.S. Navy was welcome at South African ports. The *USS Midway*, for example, docked at Cape Town during 1955. At this time, the United States had no specific objection to U.S. sailors on shore leave being subject to apartheid laws. Complaints about the treatment of the African American and Phillippino contingent of the *Midway*'s crew, emanating from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People back home, drew a standard response from the U.S. State Department: Navy policy was to obey all the laws of countries visited.⁹

South Africa had considerable ambition with respect to the role it should play in the global containment of communism. It was looking to cement itself firmly within Western security structures. Initially, Prime Minister Malan sought full membership of NATO.¹⁰ When these advances were politely frustrated, the Union began to portray itself as an “auxiliary of the NATO alliance.”¹¹ Indeed, the prime minister suggested a complementary African Defense Pact.¹² Highlighting the Soviet Union's diplomacy with Ethiopia at this time, Malan offered to take care of the defense of Sub-Saharan Africa, securing NATO's southern flank.¹³ South Africa would make available for this purpose an expeditionary force consisting of one armored division and one air squadron. This task group would be ready to deploy anywhere on the continent or, if needed, in the Middle East. In addition to this expeditionary force, the South African Navy would continue to defend the Cape sea lanes, and extend its range northward, to ease the burden on NATO's naval responsibilities.¹⁴

A state so willing to contribute to the containment of communism caught the attention of policy makers in Washington DC. It was recognized that South Africa was “prepared to undertake very serious responsibilities of importance” with respect to defending the free world. Yet, there was a sting in the tail: “they have very limited resources of their own with which to do this.”¹⁵ In order to equip its expeditionary force, and to guarantee the naval patrols offered, South Africa was requesting that the United States supply tanks, radar for air defense, aircraft for antisubmarine surveillance, fighter-bomber jets, all with relevant training, to be bought on the “least onerous financial terms.”¹⁶ Indeed, the Union's participation in the Berlin Airlift and Korea had been agreed on just such a basis. The United Kingdom had loaned the SAAF Dakota aircraft to fly its missions to Germany, and in Korea, the U.S. taxpayer had provided the aircraft and logistical support for Number Two Squadron.¹⁷ Prime Minister Malan was candid on this issue: South Africa's ability to fight communism in Africa, and beyond, depended on access to new equipment.¹⁸ All concerned were aware that South Africa sought to “modernize its obsolescent defense forces.”¹⁹

To help protect allies threatened by Soviet aggression, the U.S. Congress passed the Mutual Defense Assistance Act of 1949.²⁰ This act provided military equipment to allies in order to “strengthen morale and the material resistance of

the free nations.”²¹ Initial South African requests for aid under this program were respectfully rejected by the United States because the Act was directed at more “imperiled” states.²² NATO members were the main recipients of this scheme, with Greece, Turkey, Iran, and South Korea being the other major beneficiaries. South Africa did, however, enjoy assistance when the Act was amended in 1951, in order to include more remote partners participating in the containment of communism.²³ A treaty was duly signed between the United States and the Union later that year, and a Mutual Security Program established.²⁴ Although the United States did not agree to all items on Pretoria’s shopping list, particularly those related to the proposed expeditionary force, Washington DC did grant Pretoria good terms on military equipment and training intended for use closer to home.²⁵ South Africa, for example, received U.S. assistance in establishing an early-warning radar system, while the Joint Chiefs of Staff specifically recommended in 1956, that “South Africa be encouraged to purchase military aircraft, including fighter-bomber types, from the United States.”²⁶

Alongside South Africa’s military capabilities, U.S. policy makers were also interested in the Union’s reserves and production of strategic minerals. Concerns were repeatedly expressed within the Truman administration, for instance, over South Africa’s capacity to export chromium and manganese to the United States. With stockpiles of these minerals depleted, and the U.S. armaments industry denied access to their prewar supplies from the Soviet Union, the United States looked to South Africa to meet its demands.²⁷ To this end, the United States formally offered Pretoria assistance in defending relevant mining operations against sabotage. Although this offer was declined, with South Africa considering its own security forces capable of managing this task, US\$30 million worth of U.S. Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank loans were accepted to help increase the capacity of the Union’s railways.²⁸ This investment was aimed at easing transport congestion in South Africa and to help move strategic minerals more efficiently to ports. Similarly, South Africa, between 1946 and 1955, was to receive more than US\$150 million in the form of Ex-Im Bank loans aimed at modernizing its harbors and roads.²⁹

It was uranium, of all the strategic minerals, however, that drew the United States and South Africa closest together. The discovery of uranium reserves in the Union during 1922 took on a new importance after the success of the Manhattan Project and the use of atomic weapons at the end of World War II. The nuclear arms race had started. At the beginning of the Cold War, the United States relied heavily on the almost exhausted Shinkolobwe mine, located in the Belgium Congo. This mine supplied some 90 percent of U.S. uranium requirements, with less 5 percent of this demand being mined in the United States itself.³⁰ At the time, uranium was considered to be a scarce resource, and the “cardinal principle” of Washington DC’s atomic weapons strategy was “to increase our raw materials position and to deprive the Soviets of supplies from outside the USSR.”³¹ This strategy was of great significance to relations between the United States and South Africa.

As well as having mineable reserves of uranium, South Africa could also acquire this mineral as a by-product of its gold processing industry, extracting it from existing waste tailing heaps. Such heaps were found across the Rand. The

Union appeared to be the answer to the U.S. uranium supply problem. Acting together, the United States and the United Kingdom effectively underwrote the development of the uranium extraction and processing industry in South Africa. The United States paid two-thirds of this outlay, and the U.K. one-third. Loans were forthcoming to help mining companies establish and maintain production, whilst price guarantees ensured that these enterprises were profitable.³² The United States was also willing to assist this industry's suppliers. ESCOM, the South African state power corporation, received a US\$20 million Ex-Im Bank loan in 1952, for instance, in order to supply the electrical generation needs of the extraction plants.³³

South Africa also used its position as a uranium supplier to make sure it benefited not only economically, but also politically and scientifically, from this extraction industry. During negotiations, Pretoria successfully demanded that it wanted to be part of the "inner circle" of the emerging International Atomic Energy Agency.³⁴ Additionally, as part of Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" initiative, the United States supplied South Africa with the technology, training, and raw materials to develop its own nuclear program.³⁵ Under this agreement, over two thousand South Africans were trained in the United States as nuclear scientists, while the U.S. government and American contractors agreed to fund and build SAFARI-1, a research reactor to be located just outside Pretoria.³⁶ In return for supplying the United States with uranium, South Africa had thus acquired a profitable extraction industry and the assurance of its own nuclear reactor. It is no wonder that in 1976, Dr. A.J.A. Roux, the president of the South African Atomic Energy Board, looking back at these events, acknowledged: "We can ascribe our degree of advancement today in large measure to the training and assistance so willingly provided by the United States of America during the early years of our nuclear program ..."³⁷ All in all, whether it be in terms of military collaboration or nuclear cooperation, Pretoria and Washington DC developed significant bonds during the early Cold War era.

Economic Cooperation

Economic ties between the United States and South Africa also developed under the Truman and Eisenhower administrations. The Union would provide a profitable market for expanding U.S. business in a range of sectors, not just those relating to strategic minerals. Trading links between the two countries had been strengthened during World War II, as a result of South Africa's traditional British sources of supply being disrupted by hostilities. Now, with the National Party in power, the Union looked set to continue this more independent strategy in international markets. Unlike many of its European counterparts, the South African economy also emerged relatively buoyant from the war. This was another incentive for increased trading between the two countries. Washington DC supported this commercial intercourse by signing a double taxation treaty with South Africa in 1952, and by agreeing to renew its civil aviation agreement with Pretoria in 1954.³⁸

Benefiting from this friendly economic relationship, U.S. transnational corporations continued their penetration of the Union's economy that had started

in the 1920s and 1930s. Goodyear, Pepsico, Kellogg, Pfizer, and International Business Machines, for instance, were some of the larger American operations to establish themselves in South Africa during this period. Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler, likewise, expanded their activities, establishing their own assembly plants, as did Goodyear, Firestone, and General Tire. Between 1948 and 1960, 42 U.S. firms set up local subsidiaries in South Africa, taking the total to 160 U.S. businesses directly operating in this market.³⁹ As a result of this activity, both U.S. private direct investment in the Union, and U.S. exports to South Africa were to double during the 1950s.⁴⁰

Sydney Redecker, the consul general in Johannesburg, surveying these economic investments, could report back to the State Department that, “these developments have greatly strengthened the economic ties between South Africa and the United States and, by causing South Africa to look increasingly to the United States for financial assistance and industrial guidance and support, are harbingers of ever-closer economic relations between the two countries in the future.”⁴¹ At this time, U.S. boardrooms were free from the human rights concerns that would later impinge on economic activity between the United States and South Africa.

Unease Over Human Rights in South Africa

The civil rights movement was starting to change the political and social landscape of the United States during the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s. Events such as the Montgomery bus boycott and the Supreme Court rulings of *Shelley vs. Kramer*, 1948 and *Brown vs. Board of Education*, *Topeka*, 1954 signaled the end of state-sanctioned racialism in this country. The Truman and Eisenhower administrations, sometimes lagging behind this movement, and sometimes supporting it, could not help but acknowledge this change. President Harry Truman did not shy away from putting civil rights on the agenda of his 1948 election campaign, and, once returned to office, signed an executive order outlawing racial discrimination in the federal armed forces.⁴² The first U.S. president to address the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Truman expressed his belief that: “There is no justifiable reason for discrimination because of our ancestry, or religion, or race, or color. We must not tolerate such limitations on the freedom of any of our people . . .”⁴³ President Eisenhower also bowed to pressures created by the civil rights movement. He deployed federal troops in Little Rock, Arkansas, in order to enforce the Supreme Court’s opinion on school desegregation, and his administration likewise drafted legislation that led to the Civil Rights Act of 1957.⁴⁴ The universal freedoms evoked in speeches at the highest level at home played on the minds of those formulating U.S. foreign policy toward the Union.

A State Department policy paper of 1951 reiterated that, “It is in our interests to maintain friendly relations with South Africa because of strategic considerations and also because South Africa represents a good market for our products.” Yet, this document also acknowledged that the National Party’s racial policies “periodically produce a strain” between the two countries, “which unfortunately

is likely to continue.”⁴⁵ Although, initially, U.S. officials viewed the “apartheid experiment” with “tolerance,” “wishing the Prime Minister’s plans well,” the mood changed as a consequence of the “racial tension” created by the implementation of “heavy-handed” policies.”⁴⁶ U.S. embassy staff began to cable home more frequent warnings.

Responding to the widespread May Day riots of 1950, for instance, the U.S. *chargé d'affaires* in South Africa, Joseph Connelly, predicted that the Union’s future would now follow one of three paths: “Compromise, further riots, or a ‘police state.’ Malan’s government,” he continued, “seems to be trending toward the latter.” Connelly feared that instead of addressing the “natives’” concerns of “housing, wages, health care and liberalizing the pass laws,” the South African government would choose instead to strengthen its security apparatus.⁴⁷ Similarly, a CIA assessment of 1950 warned of serious racial violence in South Africa “within the next decade.”⁴⁸ The Agency had earlier noted that “the genuineness of many of the native grievances provides an excellent opportunity for Communist agitation.”⁴⁹

Despite these concerns over what apartheid may foment, U.S. policy makers felt they had little leverage over Pretoria. As the 1950s progressed, South Africa’s determination to develop its apartheid policies, against the tide of world opinion, became apparent. The National Party government was not about to compromise. As Prime Minister Malan put it: “To do what world opinion demands would mean suicide by white South Africa.”⁵⁰ The Truman and Eisenhower administrations felt they had few carrots and sticks to deploy on this issue. William Maddox, the *chargé* in Johannesburg, wrote in 1957, summing up the views of his embassy colleagues, “We cannot expect to persuade by preaching and lecturing, as if we were on a higher moral plateau.” After all, Maddox continued, the South African government considers itself doing God’s bidding on the continent. Instead, appeals for reform based on human rights and humanitarian grounds should be replaced with appeals highlighting “practical realism”; pointing out to Pretoria that apartheid may precipitate communist agitation, for example. In any case, Maddox believed “quiet diplomacy” was the way forward.⁵¹ This strategy of private “gentle persuasion” became the default U.S. foreign policy toward South Africa for long periods of the apartheid era.

U.S. policy makers, however, did not always have the luxury of conducting their diplomacy away from the public gaze. Apartheid, as the years progressed, was an issue that sank deep into the public consciousness worldwide. Later administrations were forced to attempt to balance strategic and economic interests against human rights concerns under the spotlight of media and public scrutiny. The Truman and Eisenhower governments, by contrast, enjoyed a relatively free hand. This was as a consequence of the U.S. domestic antiapartheid movement being unorganized at this time, and the U.S. Congress largely uninterested. Yet, even with apartheid in its infancy, the issue was still causing concern. As early as 1949, the CIA was warning that South Africa was “a propaganda liability to the U.S. and the Western bloc.”⁵² This was largely because the United States had to formulate a public response to apartheid in the United Nations. Consequently, it was the U.N. that first brought Washington DC’s interest-balancing problems into full public view.

Incensed by legislation enacted in South Africa, the Indian delegation registered a formal complaint against the Union during the very first session of the United Nations in 1946.⁵³ This complaint centered on the futures of a large number of South Africans, the 2.5 percent of the country's total population who were of Indian descent. Migrants from the sub-continent had traveled as indentured laborers to South Africa between 1860 and 1911, to work the sugar plantations of Natal. Traders and professionals from India joined these individuals before this particular conduit of migration was closed in 1913. South Africa's "Indian" community was now caught up in the opening legislative shots of apartheid. The 1946 Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act, for example, placed those of Indian descent on a separate voters roll, and limited their rights to buy and sell property. Apartheid would discriminate against these people, categorizing them as a separate population group (alongside "Africans," "coloreds," and "whites"). It was at this point that the Indian delegation chose to bring the U.N.'s attention to this state-sanctioned racial discrimination.

The South African government's response to India's complaint was simply to refuse to accept the United Nation's competence to intervene on this issue. It regarded its apartheid legislation to be solely the concern of the South African government and electorate. Pretoria's representatives freely referred to Article 2(7) of the U.N. Charter: "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State ..." Effectively, South Africa made it clear that how it chose to deal with the Union's ethnically diverse population was its own concern, and no other state's business.

The government of India, however, insisted that South Africa did have a case to answer. It argued that there was an international dimension to this dispute, with the U.N. Charter stating that Article 2 "domestic jurisdiction" rights may be overridden if an issue was a "threat to international security." As a consequence of India's complaint, the United States was forced to publicly walk a line between attempting to express concern over South Africa's racial legislation, but, in doing so, not damage its economic and strategic interests in the region. Consequently, U.S. policy on this issue, under both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, was to encourage negotiation between the two parties, and avoid, or at least moderate, any resolution of condemnation emerging.⁵⁴ The United States delegation had doubts over whether the Union's racial policies were a "threat to international security," as India claimed, but the United States (unlike its U.K. and French allies) did support debate on this issue in the General Assembly, acknowledging an obligation on the part of all member states to uphold human rights.⁵⁵

By and large, the United States successfully walked the tightrope on this particular issue. Washington DC supported a number of resolutions that reiterated its general support for human rights, but avoided any specific condemnation of the South African government.⁵⁶ Charles A. Sprague, for example, speaking on behalf of the U.S. delegation, told the General Assembly in 1952 that the United States, above all, valued the ideals of equality, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, as the history of his country testified. However, as this same history

shows, he continued, the realization of these goals is a "long and difficult task." It was therefore up to the United Nations to "create an atmosphere favorable to negotiation" for India and South Africa, "without attempting to impose any solution."⁵⁷ This would allow South Africa time and the opportunity to find a way forward to improve its racial relations.

The United States did support clauses in later resolutions expressing "regret" that negotiations between South Africa, Pakistan, and India had repeatedly stalled, but the U.S. delegation consistently made it known that it considered the General Assembly unable to "order or enforce; it can only recommend."⁵⁸ Indeed, in 1953, Frances P. Bolton registered the irritation of the United States that this item had returned to the Assembly's agenda for a sixth time (as it would a further six times afterward).⁵⁹ Washington DC was clearly discomfited by its attempts to protect its strategic and economic ally in the United Nations, whilst at the same time seeking to offer moral leadership to the world.

It may have been State Department strategy "to avoid being drawn directly into discussion of South Africa's racial problems," but the General Assembly had now acquired an appetite for raising this issue.⁶⁰ In September 1952, largely in response to the Defiance Campaign being launched by the African National Congress in South Africa, thirteen Asian and Arab states proposed a resolution addressing "the racial situation in the Union of South Africa." The whole apartheid regime was now under U.N. scrutiny, not just its treatment of the Indian community. Although, once again, the United States supported the right of the General Assembly to debate this issue, the U.S. delegation argued it was wrong to single out any one member state on the issue of human rights. Instead, all within the U.N. should be moving to improve their country's record in this area, including the United States itself.

U.S. delegate, Charles A. Sprague, before the Assembly in 1952, explained this "collective approach" further. Despite the United States being "seriously concerned" about the situation in the Union, he reasoned, "Let us not impute evil purpose or lack of intelligence to the people of South Africa. Rather our attitude should be one of neighborly helpfulness in working out just solutions to the difficult problems they face in the field of race relations ..."⁶¹ Despite growing evidence of the negative consequences of apartheid, both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations maintained this position. The United States refused to condemn South Africa over apartheid. Instead, it sought a moderation in Pretoria's approach, and adjustment over time. As U.S. delegate Harold Riegelman told the U.N. Special Political Committee in 1959: "Our joint pledges under the charter of the United Nations involve some obligations which are ideals toward which we must strive, rather than standards which can be immediately attained." He acknowledged that the United States had to act with "humility" on this issue, because of its own racial problems.⁶² The Soviet Union's difficulty in assimilating all nationalities within its territory was also often mentioned in these annual debates.⁶³ Thus, by using a strategy of generalizing the problem of human rights, and urging all member states to look to their own record in this area, the United States succeeded, at least for the time being, to avoid any condemnatory resolution being specifically laid against South Africa.⁶⁴

South Africa's refusal to terminate its administration of South West Africa (Namibia), and place this territory under the trusteeship of the United Nations, also brought the Union into conflict with international opinion during the Truman and Eisenhower presidencies. This time, the United States sought to protect its ally whilst also upholding the principal of self-determination. As a consequence, the United States made it clear it would not support Pretoria's efforts to annex South West Africa, preferring instead that there should be a transfer of power to U.N. trusteeship, but the U.S. delegation sought this goal by negotiation not compulsion.⁶⁵ Following this approach, Washington DC, as a possible solution to the deadlock, voted in favor of a 1949 resolution referring South West Africa's international status to the International Court of Justice.⁶⁶

The 1950 ICJ opinion was a partial victory for the South African Government. The court ruled that Pretoria was under no obligation to relinquish the territory; South Africa was obliged, however, to respect the spirit of the original League mandate. This meant that the Union had no authority to alter the territory's international status unilaterally (i.e. annexation), and it was obligated to present regular administrative reports to the League's successor, the United Nations. The original League mandate also required South Africa to steer the territory to eventual self-determination.⁶⁷ In response to the ICJ ruling, the United States let it be known that it would still "be desirable for South Africa to submit South West Africa to trusteeship," but if Pretoria was not minded to do this then the United States expected South Africa to "carry out the ICJ opinion."⁶⁸ Pretoria, for its part, made it clear that it would not tolerate U.N. interference in the administration of this territory. "In no circumstances," Prime Minister Malan declared, "are we going to throw South-West Africa to the wolves."⁶⁹

A Tougher Line and the 1960 Sharpville Shootings

Having to balance its South African interests publicly in the United Nations amounted to, in the CIA's assessment, a "serious embarrassment" for policy makers in Washington DC.⁷⁰ Indeed, by the mid-1950s, the U.S. delegation in New York was making its opinion known to the State Department that it wanted to be more critical of Pretoria's racial policies. Referring to civil rights events at home, *Brown vs. Board of Education* and Little Rock in particular, Henry Cabot Lodge, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, argued that domestic "developments make it even more important we express ourselves positively on racial issues."⁷¹

Events in Africa likewise encouraged Washington DC to take a harsher line against apartheid. States newly independent, or about to become independent, needed to be won over if the containment strategy was to succeed. These new nations could not be lost to the Soviet bloc. The propaganda war therefore had to be won, with the United States being seen as an ally of, and not an obstacle to, the nationalist struggle. To this end, the State Department was reorganized in 1958 to include a dedicated Africa Bureau.

State Department assessments emerging from the Union itself also began to persuade the Eisenhower administration that it had to pay more attention to this

part of the world. Fred Hadsel, for example, the acting director of the Office of Southern African Affairs, confirmed in 1956 that U.S. policy was still to "maintain the friendly relations existing between this Government and the Union Government, notably because of South Africa's strategic importance and mineral production," but he qualified this by commenting, "At the same time, U.S. policy seeks to avoid giving the appearance, in any way, of endorsing or underwriting apartheid . . ."⁷² Ambassador W.J. Gallman likewise expressed concern. Where he had previously worried South Africa may become politically unstable in the future due to a conflict between the Afrikaner and English-speaking white communities, toward the end of his posting to this country he now recognized that it was the issue of race that more realistically posed the greatest threat.⁷³

This confluence of concerns translated into U.S. pressure exerted on Pretoria. Gallman in 1953, for example, told South African officials that he was privately "deeply concerned" over the trajectory of the Union's racial relations. In the wake of the National Party election victory of that year, he tried to persuade Prime Minister Malan that he could use this new sizeable majority to offer reforms and talk to "national minded" (rather than communist) elements of the ANC.⁷⁴ Despite the ambassador backing down from this suggestion somewhat when it was challenged by Malan, the language used in the communication between the two governments, although still relatively friendly and polite, became more strained as the 1950s progressed.⁷⁵ Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, for instance, took a very direct approach. In 1953, he asked the South African ambassador in Washington DC if he knew that the "Europeans" in the Union were "sitting on a keg of dynamite." (The ambassador replied that he was aware of this and assured the Secretary that apartheid was specifically designed to ease these racial tensions.)⁷⁶

The extent of this growing U.S. concern over apartheid can be gauged by the fact that even economic relations were now being drawn into this debate. Although Washington DC was happy for *private* commercial relations between the two countries to prosper during this era, in 1953 the Eisenhower administration took the first step in limiting *public* U.S. links with the apartheid economy. The administration chose not to go ahead with a government-sponsored promotional campaign targeting U.S. private investment in South Africa. The administration was wary that Pretoria might use such official economic cooperation "for political purposes."⁷⁷

A harsher U.S. rhetoric also developed in the United Nations at this time. The language now directed at Pretoria was of an order that had previously only been used in private. In terms of the annual resolution on the "racial situation in South Africa," for instance, in 1955, the United States continued its protection of South Africa, and voted against voicing "concern" over apartheid. The following two sessions of the General Assembly, however, saw Washington DC withdraw this diplomatic support and abstain on resolutions that "deplored" Pretoria's racial policies.⁷⁸ By 1958, the transition was complete. The United States, for the first time, voted in favor of a resolution confronting Pretoria. U.S. delegate George McGregor let it be known that, although the United States did not "condemn" South Africa for its racial policies, apartheid did cause the American

people “regret and concern.”⁷⁹ A General Assembly resolution duly followed using this same phrase, which was upgraded to “deep regret and concern” in the following session.⁸⁰ Likewise, the United States supported a 1959 resolution that contained the phrase “regrets deeply” with respect to the treatment of the Indian community in South Africa.⁸¹ Reinforcing this language, the State Department was now also willing to make symbolic gestures within South Africa itself. Ambassador Philip Crowe was instructed to visit Albert Luthuli, the President of the ANC, soon after he was “banned” by the South African government in 1959.⁸²

It was the shootings at Sharpeville and Langa, on 21 March 1960, however, that sealed the tone of the language that future U.S. administrations would use with respect to apartheid. When the South African Police killed 76 unarmed antipass law protestors in these two townships, and injured 178 others, world opinion focused on South Africa’s racial policies. Henry Cabot Lodge, representing the United States in the U.N. Security Council, noted how these shootings had “caused shock and distress beyond the borders of South Africa.” The U.S. delegation therefore supported elevating debate on this issue from the General Assembly to the Security Council. Here, Lodge let it be known that the United States “deeply deplore[d] the loss of life which has taken place in South Africa,” and called upon all the parties to avoid violence. Lodge identified the policy of apartheid to be the specific cause of this conflict.⁸³ Encouraged by the change in language emanating from the U.S. delegation, Security Council resolution 134(1960) was drafted, and on 1 April 1960, the Security Council collectively “deplore[d]” the government of South Africa, and called upon Pretoria to abandon its “policies of apartheid and racial discrimination.” The United States voted in favor of this resolution. Similarly, later that year, Washington DC also supported the General Assembly in “deploring” South Africa for its intransigence over the future of South West Africa.⁸⁴

Interestingly, it seems that the initial act that resulted in this shift in U.S. language vis-à-vis apartheid was made in error. The State Department issued a press release addressing the Sharpeville incident, the day after the shootings had occurred. This read, “While the United States, as a matter of practice, does not ordinarily comment on the internal affairs of governments with which it enjoys normal relations, it cannot help but regret the tragic loss of life resulting from the measures taken against the demonstrators in South Africa.”⁸⁵ The refusal of the Eisenhower administration to respond to subsequent media requests for further interpretation of this statement hid considerable embarrassment within the executive. The initial press statement had been released without clearance from the Secretary of State. Christian Herter let it be known to the president that he was “furious” that an ally of the United States could have been treated in this way. Eisenhower observed that the “fat is in the fire,” and suggested that the South African government should privately be told that although “we are very much distressed by events in South Africa, we do not regard it as our business to make public statements like this, and officially regret having done so.”⁸⁶ The president was wary of comparisons that may be made with race relations in the United States that potentially could leave the administration

“red faced.” The Department of Defense also registered its anger at the State Department’s press release. This more conservative agency argued that the original Sharpeville statement had endangered strategic minerals supplies and access to South African ports.⁸⁷ Likewise, Ambassador Crowe cabled from Cape Town requesting that, “in the future I would appreciate being consulted before such statements are made ...”⁸⁸

Despite the anger, it does seem that the release of the initial Sharpeville statement persuaded policy makers in Washington DC to revise their language with respect to Pretoria. With South Africa having been directly criticized over apartheid, albeit inadvertently, it was easier from that point on to maintain this line. Hence, the United States felt able to “deplore” its ally via Security Council resolution 134(1960).

In terms of its diplomatic language, the United States had now made the decision to elevate its human rights concerns on a par with its strategic and economic interests in relation to the Union of South Africa. Even in the absence of an organized U.S. antiapartheid movement or Congressional interest, the Eisenhower administration felt obliged to register its concern over the realities of apartheid. The United States had thus publicly deplored this abuse of human rights, despite South Africa’s strategic and economic value.

Yet, although Security Council resolution 134(1960) had set the tone for future United States rhetoric directed at apartheid, Eisenhower chose not to sacrifice U.S. strategic or economic interests as part of this protest. Human rights concerns may have now become an equal consideration in relations between the two countries, but they had not yet usurped Washington DC’s pursuit of its more tangible interests. Economic and strategic cooperation would continue unfettered. Indeed, six months after resolution 134, Pretoria and Washington DC signed an agreement permitting the United States to house space exploration and military missile tracking stations in the Transvaal.⁸⁹ The change of rhetoric in 1960 was significant, but beyond this modification of language, little had altered in practise as a consequence of the Sharpeville shootings.

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CHAPTER 3

“THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS”:

THE KENNEDY ADMINISTRATION, 1961–1963

Traditionally, when explaining the Kennedy years, scholars of U.S. foreign policy toward South Africa tend to look back to this era with relative approval. The early 1960s saw a harsher rhetoric directed toward Pretoria, and the implementation of an arms embargo. If criticisms are laid, researchers point to too little attention being given to the Republic by senior decision makers. The phrase “benign neglect” is occasionally used. The Kennedy administration, although a champion of universal human rights, was too entangled in the prosecution of the Cold War to be able to risk, or allocate the time to, taking on Pretoria over apartheid. The result was a “holding operation” making clear the U.S. opposition to the Republic’s racial practices, but little new by the way of concrete action.¹

The paragraphs below offer a revision of this benign neglect thesis.² The chapter agrees that the Kennedy administration was indeed employing a holding operation, but this had little to do with neglect. Instead, Washington DC was deliberately executing a dual policy. The administration continued to cooperate actively with the government of South Africa where it could, but avoided policy areas too closely associated with apartheid. Overall, the aim was mutual assistance where politically possible.

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first of these charts how concerns over Pretoria’s racial policies gained more prominence during the Kennedy years. Several factors combined to demand this: the continuing evolution of apartheid; the growing civil rights movement back home; the sympathetic approach Kennedy developed toward the Third World; and personal beliefs of key personnel within the executive. Consequently, as it will be seen in the second section of the chapter, Washington DC did confront Pretoria during the early 1960s over its human rights record. Yet, as highlighted in section three, this concern did not translate into a decisive South Africa policy. An analysis of the motivations behind the imposition of the 1963 arms embargo, Kennedy’s most prominent act of confrontation, for example, reveals a confused, pragmatic approach toward apartheid. The United States did not take an unambiguous stand at this time. Instead, there was an ad hoc mixture of confrontation and

cooperation. This strategy is further illustrated in sections four and five of the chapter, which respectively look at the protection of U.S. economic and military interests vis-à-vis the Republic. Strategic and economic concerns continued to be pursued, diluting the impact of the administration's antiapartheid rhetoric and the arms embargo.

Growing External and Internal Pressures

The Sharpeville shootings of March 1960 had brought apartheid to the world's attention, but the South African government chose not to draw back at this point. Instead, Pretoria invited greater criticism through enacting additional security legislation and by expanding its experiment of "separate development." Soon after the Sharpeville incident, the two main black opposition movements, the African National Congress of South Africa and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), were legally banned in the Republic and a mass detention of activists followed. Many black leaders who avoided jail went into exile, while others attempted to operate an underground sabotage campaign. This latter strategy was soon negated, however, by the arrest of this campaign's leadership at a farm in Rivonia, outside Johannesburg. The subsequent "Rivonia trial" proved to be another touchstone of world opinion.

As for the evolution of apartheid itself, Pretoria's intentions were made clear in 1963, when it granted "self-government" to the Transkei. This was the beginning of an "independent homelands" policy where blacks and whites would be separated territorially throughout the Republic, on a permanent basis. The segregation of petty apartheid had now evolved into larger scale notions of a grand apartheid based on ethnically cleansed "Bantustans." As early as August 1961, this more radical approach from Pretoria drew predictions from within the Kennedy administration that the Republic would face "a blood bath within a few years and native radicalism that will dwarf anything hitherto seen on the African continent."³

Also complicating relations between the Kennedy administration and Pretoria was the domestic civil rights campaign within the United States itself. Although, as a U.S. senator, he had opposed Eisenhower's 1957 civil rights legislation, Kennedy in his presidential campaign, nodding to the African American vote, had committed himself to this issue. His nomination acceptance speech at the 1960 Democratic Party national convention talked of "A peaceful revolution for human rights—demanding an end to racial discrimination in all parts of our community life . . ."⁴ Once in office, Kennedy hesitantly used federal resources to enforce existing civil rights laws. In 1963, for example, he commanded national guard personnel to defend African American students' rights at the University of Alabama. The president was also finally persuaded to table a more comprehensive civil rights bill of his own. A political response was needed to meet the demands of the Freedom Riders and the March on Washington. Kennedy, asking Congress to outlaw discrimination in all public places, declared that the country faced "a moral crisis," which could not "be met by repressive police action. It cannot be left to increased demonstrations in the streets. It cannot be

quieted by token moves or talk." He acknowledged, "A great change is at hand, and our task, our obligation, is to make that revolution, that change, peaceful and constructive for all."⁵ A comparison with the situation in apartheid South Africa was clear for all who wished to make it. Kennedy's Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Governor George "Soapy" Mennen Williams, for example, warned of the consequences of the "Failure of the United States to take a stand on the racial issue on the international scene in the same forthright fashion as it has handled matters in Alabama and Mississippi." This would lead, the assistant secretary predicted, "to unfortunate domestic, as well as international, repercussions."⁶

Just as cooperating with a government implementing apartheid would not sit easily with Kennedy's domestic political agenda, good relations with South Africa would also compromise this administration's Cold War strategy of wooing existing and emerging Third World states. In abandoning the Eisenhower administration's hostility to the concept of nonalignment, Kennedy sought to win over these new governments, reducing opportunities for communist expansion.⁷ In his inauguration speech, the president pledged to these developing states "our best efforts to help them help themselves." The motivation was not simply "because the communists may be doing it," or "because we seek their votes, but because it is right."⁸ As events had shown at the United Nations, one issue that clearly unified the Third World was its opposition to apartheid. U.S. support for South Africa thus became an "increasing burden" for American diplomats, in the words of Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and a "real liability" according to a U.S. internal defense assessment.⁹ With 17 new African states admitted to the United Nations in 1960 alone, and the Organization of African Unity, at its inception, establishing a Liberation Committee sponsoring majority rule for southern Africa, it was clear that the United States had to, at a minimum, clearly voice its opposition to apartheid. Continued inaction would lose the respect and support of these new, nonaligned states.

Pressures created by the continued development of apartheid, the civil rights campaign at home, and a pro-Third World Cold War strategy were complemented by calls emanating from within the Kennedy administration itself for policy modification. The president had appointed senior personnel who had prior knowledge of African issues, and sympathies for majority rule. Undersecretary of State Chester Bowles, for example, had previously called the U.S. position on apartheid an abdication of leadership.¹⁰ Similarly, once in post, Assistant Secretary of State Mennen Williams, one of Kennedy's first appointments, would call for "Africa for the Africans."¹¹ Wayne Fredericks, Mennen Williams' deputy, likewise took a strong antiapartheid stance, as did Kennedy's ambassador in the United Nations, Adlai Stevenson.

Indeed, the president himself had previously expressed an interest in this part of the world. He had been the first chairperson of the Senate Subcommittee on Africa, and three years before his election to the White House had made a notable call for Algerian decolonization on the floor of the Senate. In this 1957 speech, Kennedy had accused the Eisenhower administration, by not confronting the French, of implementing a "head-in-the-sands policy." He had warned

Eisenhower that he could not claim to support African self-determination on one hand, yet, on the other, be unwilling to put pressure on the colonial powers to accept majority rule. "We have deceived ourselves into believing that we have pleased both sides and displeased no one," he declared, continuing, "when, in truth, we have earned the suspicion of all."¹² "Instead of abandoning African nationalism to the anti-western agitators and Soviet agents who hope to capture its leadership," Senator Kennedy counseled, "the United States, a product of political revolution, must redouble its efforts to earn the respect and friendship of nationalist leaders."¹³

Confronting Pretoria over Human Rights Concerns

Responding to these external and internal pressures, the Kennedy administration hardened the U.S. stance toward Pretoria. The harsher public rhetoric first employed by the Eisenhower administration in the wake of the Sharpeville shootings now became standard fare. In 1961, for example, Mennen Williams talked of apartheid being "a wrong headed policy fraught with dangers not alone to the people of South Africa but [also] to international peace and security." Likewise, Jonathan Bingham, a member of Kennedy's delegation at the U.N., stated that "apartheid is repugnant to us in the United States of America," as it is founded on "a hateful concept that human beings of different races are not entitled to equality of opportunity." Although U.S. officials still made the point that South Africa, amongst U.N. member states, was not alone in exercising political repression, no longer was this used as an excuse to avoid singling out Pretoria for individual censure.¹⁴ South Africa, at least verbally, had now become fair game.

The Republic's government compounded its vulnerability by not recognizing the United Nations' interest in the governance of South West Africa. Bingham described the South African administration of this territory as "harsh and repressive" in 1961, while Sidney Yates, the U.S. representative to the General Assembly, two years later declared: "By extending the apartheid laws to South-West Africa the mandatory power is, in the view of my Government, clearly delinquent in its obligations to the international community and to the population of South-West Africa."¹⁵

The United States supplemented this tougher language by supporting more confrontational U.N. resolutions. A transition of rhetoric, put in motion by the Eisenhower administration was completed under the Kennedy administration. The United States now regularly "deplored" and "condemned" the South African government for its racial policies.¹⁶ Washington DC had consciously made its public stance clear. As the U.S. Permanent Representative to the U.N. put it in 1962: "We are unalterably and irrevocably opposed to *apartheid* in all its aspects. Our traditions and our values allow no other position."¹⁷

Accompanying this harsher rhetoric, the Kennedy administration also sought to challenge Pretoria by establishing tentative links with selected elements of the Republic's black opposition. In 1961, for example, President Kennedy sent a telegram to Chief Albert Luthuli, the ANC's president, congratulating him on his

award of the Nobel Peace Prize.¹⁸ Kennedy had initially rejected the suggestion that such a cable should be sent, so as not to antagonize the South African government. Mennen Williams, however, successfully persuaded the president to change his mind. He portrayed Luthuli as a man of peace, who, most likely, would play an important role in any post-apartheid government. A compromise was therefore struck whereby the president's telegram congratulated Luthuli on a personal basis, there being no mention of the ANC in the text, and this communication was sent privately so as to avoid publicity.¹⁹ Another example of Washington DC offering the antiapartheid opposition support, albeit in very general terms, came in 1962 when Francis Plimpton, speaking at the United Nations, noted Pretoria's recent imprisonment of peaceable demonstrators, and offered "these brave men and women our sympathy and respect."²⁰ Similarly, the U.S. ambassador to South Africa, Joseph Satterthwaite, was dispatched to meet Luthuli in May 1963, after the ANC leader had been placed under effective house arrest via a series of banning orders. Five months later, the U.S. Attorney General, Robert Kennedy, likewise met with Patrick Duncan of the PAC.²¹

A greater irritant to relations between the United States and the Republic, however, proved to be the Kennedy administration's decision to hold interracial receptions at its embassy and consulate buildings in South Africa. Public functions where black and white guests could mix freely were illegal under apartheid law. Assistant Secretary Mennen Williams, however, chose to challenge this legislation directly. On the Fourth of July 1963, the United States government hosted official nonracial receptions nationwide. This was at Secretary of State Dean Rusk's insistence (and against the advice of Ambassador Satterthwaite). The functions broke no law as they were held in the embassy and consulate grounds, and were thus technically hosted on U.S. territory. Rusk had previously directly asked his South African counterpart if the Republic's government would tolerate such a gathering. He had been warned bluntly that it would not. The multiracial receptions were held anyway. Mennen Williams and Rusk correctly assumed that, although they risked a break of diplomatic relations between the two countries, Pretoria would avoid escalating any confrontation.²² In a cable to the South African government, Rusk explained "my government has decided, in the light of its convictions and practices on the question of official multi-racial entertaining (which conform with those of practically all other countries of the world) that our customs and conventions rather than yours should henceforth be observed by the American Embassy and consulates in South Africa with regard to the celebration of our Independence Day."²³ Representatives of the South African government declined their own invitations to attend these functions.²⁴

The 1963 Arms Embargo and a "Divided Policy"

The key instrument of confrontation deployed by the Kennedy administration, complementing the harsher public rhetoric and symbolic meetings with black opposition leaders, was the imposition of an arms embargo. In August of 1963, the United States announced that it would, from the end of that year, unilaterally stop U.S. citizens from selling military equipment to South Africa.²⁵ Explaining

this decision to the U.N., Ambassador Stevenson noted that Pretoria had proved unresponsive to both private friendly persuasion and public condemnation in international bodies. As the ambassador put it: "the visible result of all these discussions and resolutions here in the United Nations and all diplomatic activity so far is zero." The United States had therefore decided to make official its existing stance of not selling military equipment to apartheid-enforcing agencies. "Stopping the sale of arms to South Africa," Stevenson continued, "emphasizes the hope that the Republic of South Africa will now reassess its attitude toward *apartheid*."²⁶

The decision to impose an arms ban originated with lobbying inside the Kennedy executive. In October 1962, Harlan Cleveland, Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, and George Mennen Williams jointly warned the secretary of state that parliamentary tactics at the United Nations, attempting to delay punitive sanctions against South Africa, would win a stop-gap of only one year, at best.²⁷ Pressure for action against South Africa had now become irresistible. Ambassador Stevenson agreed. He expressed the view that it was inevitable that the "U.S. will have to review its position on apartheid before the next General Assembly. Otherwise, continued opposition to such resolutions on apartheid will be considered by all but a very few Afro-Asians as evidence of our tacit approval of the policies of the Government of South Africa."²⁸ By June 1963, Soapy Williams wrote to Dean Rusk: "We have reached a point where we must take a more vigorous stand against apartheid." He added, "In African opinion we can no longer rest our case on a condemnation of apartheid. We must be ready to back our condemnation with some form of meaningful action." It was now essential that Washington DC show "that we mean business in our disapproval of apartheid."²⁹ Reiterating this point a month later, Williams stressed, "A complete arms embargo is the least the U.S. can do to maintain our position of influence with the Africans . . ."³⁰

Despite this head of steam being built supporting punitive action within the African and International Organizations bureaux of the State Department, there remained considerable opposition to an arms embargo elsewhere in the Kennedy administration. Secretary of State Dean Rusk, for example, made clear his unease. In a June 1963 memorandum to Undersecretary of State W. Averell Harriman, Rusk argued:

It is true that [the United States has] the strongest objections to apartheid in the Union of South Africa; we have said so repeatedly and have asserted our view to the point where our relations with the Union of South Africa are in a continuing state of tension. But I believe it is worth reminding ourselves that there are other states where obnoxious practices of one sort or another exist—and in some of them in the most exaggerated form.

"I will admit that apartheid presents a case of unusual difficulty," Secretary Rusk continued, "but I would not put it ahead of the violations of human rights within the communist bloc or in certain countries governed on an authoritarian basis with which we have correct and sometimes even friendly relations."

The secretary of state therefore advocated that the United States "should not assist the Union of South Africa with means of enforcing its apartheid policy but that we should assist them in playing the kind of role which they have already played in two World Wars and which now is a part of a total confrontation affecting the life and death of our own nation."³¹ Joseph C. Satterthwaite, the U.S. ambassador to South Africa, had likewise earlier counseled against an arms embargo. In the wake of the ANC and PAC turning to a sabotage campaign in the Republic, Satterthwaite feared that this had created opportunities for communist encroachment. He argued that the South African government, rather than be denied military equipment, should be assisted in building its counterinsurgency capability.³² Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, also expressed his desire that military links with South Africa should continue on a normal footing, as far as possible.³³

With Mennen Williams, Stephenson, and Cleveland outranked by more senior officials within the Kennedy executive, it initially seemed as if an arms embargo would not be imposed on the Republic.³⁴ When, however, the question of respective sanctions against South Africa and Portugal became linked on the agenda of the United Nations, the issue became more complicated. With both these governments coming under pressure from African and Asian states, due to their racial practices in southern Africa, the Kennedy administration conceded sanctions against South Africa effectively delinking the two issues.

A July 1963 memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary McNamara summed up the U.S. position. "The importance of Portugal lies primarily in the importance of U.S. base rights in the Azores," the Chiefs wrote, "and secondarily in the membership of Portugal in NATO. Loss of the Azores would seriously degrade the responsiveness, reliability, and control of major U.S. forces." By contrast, the JCS considered the "peacetime contribution of the Republic of South Africa to U.S. security is considerably less important than that of Portugal." Although the United States enjoyed missile-tracking facilities housed on South African soil, and the Republic was located in a strategic part of the world, Pretoria was not as important militarily as Lisbon. Consequently, the JCS recommended that, "If a resolution is directed against Portugal and South Africa jointly, the United States should endeavor to have the issues separated to permit more rational consideration of them."³⁵ As Special Assistant to the President Arthur Schlesinger observed: "The choice may well be between the military risk of losing the Azores and the South African tracking stations and the political risk of losing Africa."³⁶

At the cabinet meeting of 18 July 1963, President Kennedy decided to impose an arms embargo against South Africa as a political compromise in order to save U.S. access to the Azores military base. Asked by the president at this meeting what the French would do under these circumstances, Ambassador Stevenson responded that they would attempt to seek the best of both worlds. Kennedy replied: "Well, let us try that this time."³⁷ In practical terms, this meant implementing an arms embargo immediately and unilaterally against Pretoria, in advance of a Security Council resolution, with the Kennedy administration

portraying itself as leading the free world on the issue of apartheid. At the same time, U.S. officials made it known that they would oppose any similar moves against Lisbon. Faced with this *fait accompli*, the United Nations duly followed the U.S. lead and passed resolutions banning the sale of military equipment and munitions to South Africa.³⁸ The Security Council did not attempt to impose similar measures against Portugal.

The fact that the 1963 arms embargo was a consequence of political compromise, and that Kennedy was seeking the best of both worlds, was reflected in the status of this sanction. It is significant, for example, that the embargo was only voluntary in nature. U.S. officials emphasized that they considered a mandatory embargo unwarranted in this case, as there was no "clear and present threat" to international peace.³⁹ Washington DC was keen not to set a precedent for the United Nations. Putting the embargo into perspective, Ambassador Stevenson warned that his government would consider any further punitive sanctions against the Republic, particularly those of an economic nature, to be "bad law and bad policy." Instead, he expressed a belief that attempts should now be made to "build a bridge of communication, discussion and persuasion" with Pretoria over the apartheid issue.⁴⁰

As well as the voluntary status of the embargo, the ambition of this arms ban was likewise tempered by Kennedy's political maneuvering. The administration made it known that, despite its action, the United States would still honor military contracts with South Africa that pre-dated the August announcement, in addition to any new agreements negotiated prior to the ban coming into force at the end of the year. Spare parts and maintenance contracts relating to previously sold equipment similarly would not be included in the embargo. Also added to these exceptions, reflecting Cold War priorities, were arms and munitions that Washington DC considered vital for the "the common defense effort in assuring the maintenance of international peace and security."⁴¹ In other words, the United States would avoid selling weapons to the Republic that could be used in the enforcement of apartheid, but it would not embargo items that would compromise the ability of the South African Defense Force to monitor and deter perceived Soviet ambitions in this part of the world. Small arms and antipersonnel equipment were thus placed on the prohibited list, whereas more sophisticated weapons, such as submarines, for instance, would not necessarily be banned.

In many ways, Kennedy's decision to impose an arms embargo in 1963 merely confirmed and formalized existing U.S. policy. The administration, early in its term of office, had arrived at a point where it operated a "dual strategy" toward South Africa. Washington DC's priority was to avoid assisting Pretoria in enforcing apartheid, and private and public statements were made voicing opposition to this system.⁴² However, despite this stand, where possible, the United States still wished to benefit from cooperation, particularly in the strategic and economic fields. As an internal defense assessment of the Republic, made by the U.S. embassy in 1962, put it:

Our policy problem is how best to influence South Africa's internal policies in a constructive direction while maintaining correct and mutually advantageous

relations. We do not intend to desist from criticism of South Africa's racial policies, both because we consider those policies dangerous and short-sighted, and because we regard it essential for our overall policy in Africa to remain in step with wider African opinion. Our basic approach, therefore, is to distinguish between non-cooperation in matters directly or indirectly related to South Africa's apartheid policy, and cooperation in other important fields.⁴³

As early as 1961, South African Foreign Minister, Eric Louw, had let Secretary of State Dean Rusk know that he was "disturbed" that U.S. policy toward his country had now become one only of "divided cooperation."⁴⁴ Yet, Pretoria continued to foster areas of mutual benefit with the United States even after the imposition of the arms embargo. In this respect, having explored in the paragraphs above the areas in which the Kennedy administration was not prepared to associate itself with Pretoria, the chapter now turns its attention to the other side of this dual policy: continued U.S. cooperation with the Republic in economic and strategic fields. The key for Washington DC, having embarked on this dual strategy was, in the words of the Kennedy's 1957 U.S. Senate speech on Algeria, to avoid earning "the suspicion of all."⁴⁵

Economic Interests under the Kennedy Administration

The adoption of the 1963 arms embargo did not diminish pressure placed on the Kennedy administration for the United States to support a comprehensive package of punitive sanctions. Indeed, the General Assembly in 1962 had voted in favor of recommending that all member states withdraw their diplomatic representation in the Republic, they embargo this country's ports and airspace, prevent South African goods from being sold on their territory, and bar exports to the Republic.⁴⁶ The United States voted against this resolution, believing that South Africa, instead of being isolated, should be exposed to world opinion.⁴⁷ Washington DC's negative stance, alongside that of France and the United Kingdom, ensured that such sanctions would not become mandatory or widely implemented. Indeed, due to the veto power of these permanent members (either threatened or actually cast), the 1963 arms embargo represented the sum total of binding economic measures placed by the U.N. on South Africa during the apartheid era.⁴⁸

In objecting to additional sanctions, the Kennedy administration advanced four central arguments: the belief that negotiation still remained the best way forward to eradicate apartheid, its view that an economic embargo simply would not work, the idea that black South Africans would be the individuals most disadvantaged by any punitive measures, and the general principle that it would be tactically incorrect to isolate a government while, at the same time, seeking to influence it.⁴⁹

In December 1962, Ambassador Satterthwaite cabled home his view that U.S. policy toward the Republic should be about strengthening "those elements of the white minority that desired to bring about a constructive evolution toward racial harmony and eventual equality." He warned that "excessive pressure to bring

about an immediate change [i.e. sanctions] could result in internal disintegration and anarchy.”⁵⁰ His embassy advocated instead, “continued judicious pressure and discreet attempts to persuade and convince government officials and other influential people that significant change must be made.”⁵¹ Washington DC backed reform from above in the Republic. This was the scenario that U.S. officials not only thought the most likely outcome, but was also the path that would benefit the United States the most. Ordered change would minimize violence, limit opportunities for Soviet encroachment, and protect U.S. material interests.

Such thinking even led several senior members of the Kennedy administration to take seriously Pretoria’s pronouncements on the positive aims of apartheid, the idea that this system would eventually prove beneficial for all racial groups on the southern tip of Africa. There was a belief amongst South African diplomats, for example, that Secretary Rusk was sympathetic to “our situation.”⁵² Ideas of partition and federation were not entirely dismissed in Washington DC. The State Department’s Policy Planning Committee in 1963, for example, considered, “the Bantustan proposals deserve more analysis.”⁵³ Without the benefit of historical hindsight, U.S. officials, harboring a fear that an alternative strategy of confrontation could precipitate revolution, chose to cautiously cooperate with the South African government. In effect, by default, the Kennedy administration granted Foreign Minister Louw’s request that the apartheid experiment be given more time to prove its worth.⁵⁴

Alongside favoring reform from above, the United States also rejected the call for additional punitive sanctions believing that these measures simply would not work. As early as March 1961, Jonathan B. Bingham cautioned the Trustee Committee of the U.N. General Assembly: “Let us be careful,” we should “avoid the temptation of making recommendations that are impractical and cannot conceivably be carried out, or which, even if carried out, will not contribute to an improvement of the situation or may even be harmful to our basic objectives.”⁵⁵ Francis Plimpton took up this theme a year later. “I could not sympathize more with the sense of frustration which lies behind the appeal for sanctions,” he told the Assembly, “but I submit that that frustration would be exacerbated by the adoption of a program inherently doomed to failure.” Plimpton suggested that a blockade against the Republic would be easily breached.⁵⁶

Introducing another component to the U.S. antisancctions argument, Plimpton told the Assembly’s Special Political Committee that the United States would not vote for sanctions as these “would endanger the victims of *apartheid* and the peace of Africa.”⁵⁷ Plimpton expanded on this theme:

One can thoroughly understand and warmly sympathize with the impatience of many of our friends of the continued obdurate refusal of the Union Government to heed our solemn resolutions or to move towards compliance with its obligations under the charter. However, I submit that our paramount consideration should not be punitive action against a recalcitrant government but the welfare of *apartheid*’s unfortunate victims themselves. Will their welfare be bettered by harsh measures which would fall not so much on the governmental leaders we are trying to influence as on all the South African people, and which might well serve to harden the hard core of racial intolerance and stifle the emerging voices of reason? Might such

measures result in increased oppression and exploitation of the very ones we are seeking to help?⁵⁸

Humanitarian concerns, therefore, were cited as another reason why Washington DC rejected any blanket international ban on South African trade and investment.

The fourth argument offered by the Kennedy administration explaining its reluctance to implement punitive measures was the issue of isolation. This stemmed from a belief that the Republic should be exposed to the outside world as much as possible. Such exposure would make it clear to South African officials that apartheid was not compatible with the norms of twentieth-century racial relations practiced elsewhere. Consequently, Washington DC was keen to prevent South African delegations from being barred in international fora. These bodies offered opportunities for negotiation with the white minority government. As Ambassador Stevenson suggested: "conflicting views cannot be reconciled *in absentia*."⁵⁹

Despite voicing the arguments above, the Kennedy administration itself did not seek to actively promote U.S. trade and investment with South Africa. Guidelines issued in 1961 advised federal personnel to only "offer advice, when sought." If approached, officials were instructed to recommend "prudent," shorter-term, trade and investment in the Republic, pointing out the unpredictable political situation.⁶⁰ In effect, the Kennedy administration was arriving at a position where the U.S. government "neither encouraged, nor discouraged" economic contact with South Africa. This phrase would later become a familiar mantra adopted by all subsequent U.S. administrations during the apartheid era.

Notwithstanding this lack of official encouragement from the U.S. government, American citizens and companies played a significant role in the South African economy during the early 1960s. In the wake of the 1960 Sharpeville shootings there was a massive flight of capital from the Republic. In the 18 months to June 1961, R248 million left South Africa, while gold and foreign exchange reserves fell from R315 million in January 1960 to R142 million by 1961.⁶¹ Hit by the fallout from Sharpeville, and the subsequent loss of investor confidence, the South African economy began to creak. By the middle of the decade, however, stability had been restored, and the Republic's economy enjoyed remarkable buoyancy. A group of U.S. investors, most notably Charles W. Engelhard, helped turn things around. Attempting to protect his existing investments in the Republic, Engelhard rallied his New Jersey associates and organized a private loan of US\$150 million to the South African government. He was also instrumental, as a major Democratic Party donor, in persuading the Kennedy administration, in December 1961, to support Pretoria in securing US\$18.8 million worth of drawing rights from the IMF. A World Bank loan of US\$25 million was forthcoming in the following month.⁶² This infusion of capital resulted in the partial plugging of the massive hole in South Africa's finances, and the nerves of investors were settled.

Encouraged by this turn around, the U.S. banking sector began to look more favorably on the South African economy. Following a US\$30 million loan to Anglo-American's Rand Selection Corporation from a consortium of U.S. institutional investors, the First National City Bank of New York offered the government's Industrial Development Corporation US\$5 million of revolving

credit. Similarly, 12 of the largest U.S. banks, including Chase, First National and Dillon, Read and co., provided an additional US\$40 million of credit at this time.⁶³ Richard Hull, in his survey of American enterprise in South Africa, considers it is “reasonable to conclude that Engelhard, the IMF, World Bank, and key American private banking institutions and institutional investors played an important role . . . in saving the [South Africa] economy from possible collapse.”⁶⁴ The Kennedy administration, whilst taking no official position on this U.S. investment, opposed any attempts to restrict this flow of capital to South Africa.

Strategic Interests under the Kennedy Administration

In October 1961, Secretary of State Dean Rusk instructed the U.S. embassy in Pretoria not to allow differences over race relations to “infect” the total range of contacts existing between the United States and South Africa.⁶⁵ The subsequent months demonstrated that nowhere was this directive, and the administration’s dual strategy, more apparent than in the field of strategic cooperation.

The most tangible U.S. interests found in the Republic at this time were several missile tracking stations, all located in the Transvaal.⁶⁶ These facilities were used by the U.S. Air Force and NASA to provide telemetric data for both military and outer space programs. In 1961, the U.S. lease of these sites was due for renewal. After initial debate within the administration questioning continued military cooperation with Pretoria, and the possibility that these tracking stations may be lost to political unrest, a more detailed assessment was commissioned.⁶⁷ The Deputy Secretary of Defense, Roswell Gilpatric, duly reported that the nonrenewal of the lease contract “would be painful, but not fatal” to U.S. interests.⁶⁸ Despite this assessment, in the spirit of the dual strategy, the contract was renewed.⁶⁹ Deemed to be an action that helped maintain the security of the free world, and not a measure that would directly assist the implementation of apartheid, cooperation in this instance was acceptable.⁷⁰

The dual strategy was also evident in the manner in which this 1961 agreement was negotiated. As a “sweetener,” Washington DC had agreed to consider South African requests to buy U.S. weaponry.⁷¹ Catching wind of these talks, Ambassador Stevenson wrote to Dean Rusk:

I have recently heard about the proposed agreement with the Union of South Africa for (a) a missile tracking station, and (b) a sale of arms including fighter aircraft.

While I am not fully informed about the necessity for this transaction, I am sufficiently concerned to presume to send you this note of caution. At a time when the feeling about apartheid and the policy of the Union of South Africa is rising everywhere, including pressure for sanctions in the U.N., I would think that the necessity must be very compelling to risk the repercussions from a transaction of this kind if and when it becomes known, as it must inevitably. I hardly need add that relations with the rest of Africa, and especially the new states, are important to our security too.⁷²

Deputy Secretary Gilpatric’s assessment likewise made the point that, although the Department of Defense did not want to casually lose access to the South African

tracking stations as a result of deliberate provocation, this site was not of sufficient strategic value to justify "compromise on issues which the State Department regards as fundamental in the conduct of its foreign policy."⁷³

This meant that, although the contract was renewed, the United States failed to meet Pretoria's initial terms. Just as the dual approach eased the continued use of the tracking stations, it did not permit the sale of equipment that could potentially be used in the implementation of apartheid. Thus, a decision was made early in these negotiations to refuse the sale of a number of Lockheed aircraft specifically requested by Pretoria.⁷⁴ A consignment of Sidewinder missiles was sold instead, weapons of this nature being unlikely to be used in any conflict directly associated with apartheid. Likewise, relations were soothed by the United States agreeing to renew its atomic energy agreement with South Africa, which included the continued supply of enriched uranium to Pretoria's ongoing nuclear energy program.⁷⁵

Another area where strategic cooperation between Pretoria and Washington DC flourished in the 1960s related to intelligence gathering. With South Africa's withdrawal from the British Commonwealth in 1961, and a subsequent decline in the quality of intelligence routed via London, the United States itself took more responsibility for monitoring events and movements in southern Africa. Relations between South African and U.S. intelligence agencies were evidently close. W.C. Naudé, Pretoria's ambassador to the United States, noted in 1961 that South Africa had "many friends" in the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.⁷⁶ The claim from a retired CIA operative that he played a role in Nelson Mandela's arrest likewise supports this idea of close liaison.⁷⁷

It was the debate held within the administration over the sale of submarines to Pretoria, however, that best illustrates the confused and ambiguous nature of U.S. policy toward South Africa during Kennedy's watch. Naval contacts between the two countries remained strong during the early 1960s. The Department of Defense sent a flotilla of five warships on a goodwill visit to South Africa during 1961, for example, and the Republic's port facilities were deemed "important" to Washington DC's Cold War strategy.⁷⁸ Building upon these naval links, in March 1963, South Africa made an approach, via the U.S. naval attaché in the Republic, seeking clearance to purchase two or three submarines from the United States. The initial response from the Kennedy administration was positive. In putting the case for acceptance of the sale, Secretary of State Rusk noted that such a significant arms sale may provoke a potential cost in "political terms," but "on balance" he favored the transaction noting South Africa's commitment to the two countries' "mutual defense," and the potential balance of payments boost this sale would bring.⁷⁹ President Kennedy replied that it helped that such vessels could not be used directly in the enforcement of apartheid, or as Undersecretary of State George Ball had it: "You don't chase Africans with submarines." Kennedy consequently approved the sale of these weapons on the condition that this could "be made on acceptable terms."⁸⁰

It was at this point, however, that the submarine negotiations became caught up in a wider debate over South African arms sales, a debate that led to the United States imposing its voluntary embargo in August 1963. At this time,

Ambassador Stevenson argued that no further U.S. arms sales should take place after this ban came into effect on 31 December of that year.⁸¹ The president was less strict in his interpretation of the embargo. Submarines, after all, clearly fell into the ban's "international security" exemption. Effectively, Kennedy was undecided, pitting political costs against the balance of payments benefits. As he told Stevenson, "if the Africans are going to be mad for three days, we can take it. If they are going to stay mad, it may not be worth \$100 million."⁸² Kennedy authorized further negotiations, delaying a final decision.⁸³

The White House was more clear thinking on its approval for the sale of antisubmarine aircraft and spare parts for previously sold C-130 planes. The president made it known that the United States would comply with its pronouncements of August 1963, both in terms of the embargo itself, and the exceptions that had been stated at this time (where existing contracts would be honored, certain after-sales items approved, and that the embargo would not necessarily include equipment relevant to the prosecution of the Cold War). "Having made a major concession in August," Kennedy wrote to Rusk, "we cannot get in the position of having to make substantial new concessions on this issue every few months."⁸⁴ A line had to be drawn. The president's position was that the U.S. arms ban only related to equipment that could be used to enforce apartheid. One may only speculate whether this stance would have led to the approval of the submarine sales early in 1964. Kennedy's assassination prevented any such decision. It seems likely, however, that the president was arriving at a position where the dual strategy would have been applied to these items as well.

The debate over the submarine sales demonstrates that President Kennedy was, indeed, attempting to get the "best of both worlds" when it came to U.S. foreign policy toward South Africa. A dual strategy was in place as early as 1961. Guidelines circulated at this time advised: "Without specifically making known this distinction to the South African Government, differentiate between (1) cooperation with South Africa in matters relating to the defense of the Free World against Sino-Soviet Bloc expansion and aggression, and (2) a markedly lesser degree of cooperation with South Africa in other fields."⁸⁵ Consequently, the Kennedy administration balanced its confrontations with the Republic (rhetorical opposition and contact with the black opposition) with cooperation (arms sales, intelligence liaison, and the tracking station and atomic energy contracts). In August 1963, the administration took the lead in imposing, in advance of the United Nations, a voluntary arms embargo. Yet, in terms of a change in policy, this action had more symbolic value than practical results. The exceptions attached to this embargo meant, in effect, that the existing dual strategy continued.

However, maneuvering space for the dual approach was receding. As the subsequent chapters show, it would be difficult for Kennedy's successors to walk this line between cooperation and confrontation, whilst at the same time claiming to be leading the free world on the issue of apartheid. William Brubeck, of Kennedy's national security staff, recognized this reality shortly before the president's assassination. "In the past several years," Brubeck wrote in

October 1963, “we have sailed an improvised, often erratic course between the antagonists, with a series of minor concessions to the Africans as the pressures mounted, while avoiding an irreparable break with the Portuguese or South Africans. While this has been the most sensible—indeed the only sensible—course open to us, we are beginning to run out of sailing room.”⁸⁶

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CHAPTER 4

“A FRUSTRATINGLY DIFFICULT SET OF POLICY CONSIDERATIONS TO JUGGLE”: THE JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION, 1963–1969

Given the untimely death of John F. Kennedy, historians often focus on issues of continuity between the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. Scholars examining relations between the United States and South Africa during this period have taken a similar path. David Dickson, for example, states that “the Johnson administration did not establish an independent identity for its policy. Its chief premises were unchanged.”¹ Likewise, Arthur Gavshon considers Kennedy’s original “holding operation” to have continued for the remainder of the 1960s.² These authors argue that Johnson followed in Kennedy’s footsteps by voicing opposition to apartheid, but both administrations were prevented from expending more time addressing the Republic’s racial policies due to higher priorities. Civil rights at home and Vietnam abroad relegated the status of Johnson’s South Africa policy to one of benign neglect.

The current chapter offers a different interpretation. It argues that the South Africa policies of Kennedy and Johnson were not contiguous. Whereas Kennedy sought the best of both worlds, implementing an ad hoc combination of condemnation and cooperation, as circumstances and opportunities presented themselves, the approach of the Johnson administration was more consistent, perhaps even more principled, when it came to addressing the issue of human rights. Whilst there was indecision when the Kennedy administration was forced to balance U.S. interests in South Africa, often resulting in strategic and economic concerns being favored (or at least these interests not being damaged), this happened less during President Lyndon B. Johnson’s watch. There was still a great deal of indecision in Johnson’s balancing act, but more often than not when a decision was finally made, human rights interests won out and a definitive stand was taken. As a result, the Johnson administration’s South Africa policy was more coherent.

This is not to say, however, that Johnson radically overhauled U.S. foreign policy toward this part of the world. Washington DC still regarded South Africa

as an ally, despite the increasing awkwardness of relations. Consequently, the punitive economic sanctions demanded by African and Asian states were not forthcoming during the Johnson years. The administration was only prepared to go so far in breaking from the previous protection of U.S. economic and strategic interests in the Republic.

Illustrating this more consistent policy, the chapter is divided into six sections. Section one briefly examines the domestic and international environment influencing decision makers at this time, while section two builds an overview of Johnson's South Africa strategy. The policy itself is then broken down into three component parts addressing respectively, human rights, strategic, and economic interests. The chapter then concludes by analyzing the 1966 South West Africa (Namibia) decision of the International Court of Justice.

The ICJ ruling considerably undermined the Johnson administration's South Africa strategy, forcing its approach into wholesale review. It was recognized that U.S. decision makers were struggling to implement an effective South Africa policy. There was an acknowledgment that the United States was failing to reconcile its conflicting interests in this country, while at the same time losing influence and the respect of all the parties involved. In reality, although the Johnson administration may have succeeded in producing a more coherent policy than its predecessor, with strategic interests gradually being sacrificed to reinforce Washington DC's human rights position, the United States was still struggling to formulate its response to apartheid South Africa.

Civil Rights at Home and Abroad

In terms of domestic legislative advances addressing civil rights and welfare provision, the Johnson administration instigated significant changes in U.S. society. The 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act broke the back of institutionalized racism in the United States, while President Johnson's "Great Society" program tackled the issue of poverty. Johnson considered his vision of a Great Society to rest "on an abundance of liberty for all. It demands an end to poverty and racial injustice, to which we are totally committed in our time."³ Likewise, in his 1965 message to Congress, endorsing the Voting Rights bill, the president pleaded, "to deny a man his hopes because of his color or race, his religion or the place of his birth—is not only to do injustice, it is to deny America ...". He reasoned: "should we defeat every enemy, should we double our wealth and conquer the stars, and still be unequal to this issue [civil rights], then we will have failed as a people and as a nation."⁴

With President Johnson taking such a strong stance on civil rights at home, there were obvious implications for U.S. relations with South Africa. As two members of Johnson's national security staff put it, with the president was "working to make the American Negro fully part of American society, he doesn't think it is all a good idea to encourage a separate view on foreign policy. We don't want an integrated domestic policy and a segregated foreign policy ...".⁵ Indeed, whilst President Johnson did not go out of his way to get involved in African issues, he did make significant contributions.⁶ In May 1966, for example, he made a speech

on the occasion of the third anniversary of the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Johnson declared: "The foreign policy of the United States is rooted in its life at home. We will not permit human rights to be restricted in our own country. And we will not support policies abroad which are based on the rule of minorities or the discredited notion that men are unequal before the law. We will not live by a double standard—professing abroad what we do not practice at home, or venerating at home what we ignore abroad."⁷ Although the timing of this speech coincided with Senator Robert Kennedy's much publicized visit to South Africa (with Johnson wary of Kennedy using this trip for domestic political gain), this was nevertheless the first time a serving president of the United States had made an address dedicated to African issues.⁸

South Africa, however, was travelling a different road to that of the United States. Whereas in the United States the federal government was now promoting a path of racial integration, Pretoria remained committed to separate development. Johnson's term of office coincided with a tightening of legislation to protect the apartheid experiment. Detention without trial became a widely used tactic by the Republic's security forces, whilst the 1964 conclusion of the Rivonia trial saw the leadership of this country's black nationalist movements collectively sentenced to life imprisonment. In the assessment of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, the antiapartheid opposition now had "little chance of significant progress through 1970, and probably for some considerable time thereafter."⁹ Against this background, the Johnson administration, however it chose to balance its interests with respect to the Republic, was always going to struggle to persuade Pretoria to modify its racial policies.

Johnson's South Africa Policy: An Overview

In March 1964, the National Security Council received a briefing from its staff that warned that the "timetable for basic decisions concerning Southern Africa has been drastically foreshortened by actions now being taken in South West Africa and South Africa by the Verwoerd government." It was predicted that Pretoria's determination to consolidate apartheid and to export this system to Namibia had made a diplomatic showdown in the United Nations inevitable. The United States needed a policy able to cope with this eventuality. "Up to now," the briefing continued, "our policy on South Africa has been something of an ad hoc combination of continuing to preserve our basically good relations with the Republic in the light of our considerable trade, investment, strategic and scientific (e.g. space tracking stations) interests there, while at the same time making clear our opposition to apartheid."¹⁰ The report recommended that the Johnson administration continue to occupy this "middle ground," between wholesale support for Pretoria on one hand, and punitive sanctions on the other, but that a more coherent strategy be implemented.¹¹

Key to this strategy was an expected ruling from the International Court of Justice on South West Africa, due in 1965. Two former League of Nations members, Liberia and Ethiopia, had asked the Court's opinion over whether South Africa had breached the terms of the League's original mandate for this territory.

The complainants charged that the stipulated responsibility for the “well-being and development” of this territory’s inhabitants had been violated by Pretoria.¹² Most U.S. government officials predicated their actions on a belief that the ICJ would rule in favor of Ethiopia and Liberia.¹³

The Johnson administration, however, intended to make good use of the delay before the ICJ came to its decision. The priority was to ensure, through “a series of diplomatic actions,” that the United Nations would not take any punitive steps against Pretoria until after the ICJ ruling.¹⁴ This would give Washington time to make contingencies for its strategic and economic interests in the Republic, as well as to try to persuade Pretoria to moderate the policy of apartheid.¹⁵ A series of measures were put in place, formalized by McGeorge Bundy, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, through the issuing of National Security Action Memorandum 295 (NSAM 295) of 24 April 1964.¹⁶ These measures are discussed in detail, presented in sections focusing on U.S. human rights, strategic, and economic interests.

NSAM 295 and Human Rights Interests

Governor G. Mennen Williams, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, told the House Subcommittee on Africa in 1966 that: “The broad aims of U.S. policy towards South Africa are essentially political. We support freedom, equality, and justice for the people of South Africa . . . These political aims are paramount. In scientific, economic, and strategic respects our bilateral relationships with South Africa are useful to us—even in some fields important—but they are not essential to our national security.” Reinforcing this point, Williams went on to declare: “Our basic policies regarding South Africa stem from broad principles much more than from immediate specific interests . . .”¹⁷ Indeed, more so than in the past, this was the case. The Johnson administration was prepared to distance itself from Pretoria where issues of principle were at stake. Williams’ testimony may have hidden key areas where material, rather than “political,” interests still held sway (see below), but in order to take a stand against apartheid, Washington DC was now prepared to sacrifice strategic and economic benefits.

The Johnson administration, as had been the case since the 1960 Sharpeville shootings, continued U.S. public rhetoric “condemning” apartheid. Early in the administration, Adlai Stevenson, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, pronounced Pretoria’s racial policies to be both “repugnant” and “morally intolerable.” Two years later, Assistant Secretary Williams confirmed that the United States was “in complete and unalterable opposition to *apartheid*.”¹⁸ It was in 1968, however, before the Organization of African Unity, that the administration delivered its definitive statement on this issue. Vice President Hubert Humphrey, in Addis Ababa, directing his comments to all the white minority governments of southern Africa, presaged: “To those who still believe that small minorities can indefinitely hold domination over large majorities, I say: you ignore the most vital and inevitable movement of our time—self-determination . . . I say you tragically misread the will and determination of Africans everywhere. You

misread history and fail to understand the future.” Humphrey made his government’s position rhetorically unambiguous: “Let us be clear where America stands. Segregation: we oppose it. Discrimination: we oppose it. Exploitation: we oppose it. Social injustice: we oppose it. Self determination: we support it. Territorial integrity: we support it. National independence: we support it. Majority rule—one man, one vote: we support it.”¹⁹ The extent of Washington DC’s growing frustration with the white minority-ruled southern African states is reflected in this last sentence. “One person, one vote” was a phrase that had been consciously avoided prior to Humphrey’s OAU address.

A number of symbolic acts were organized to support this rhetoric. Multiracial receptions continued to be held at U.S. embassy and consulate buildings in South Africa, despite Pretoria’s objections (and an apparent difficulty in finding contractors to undertake catering for these events); requests for Foreign Minister Hilgard Muller to meet President Johnson were deflected; and Charles Fahy, a former U.S. solicitor general, was dispatched to observe the trial of Nelson Mandela and his co-accused in 1964.²⁰ In this latter case, although the United States was keen not to be seen as interfering in the Rivonia trial, Williams did go on record to voice U.S. “concerns” over this prosecution.²¹

It was in areas where apartheid legislation directly affected U.S. government personnel, however, that the Johnson administration was prepared to confront Pretoria head-on. On several occasions, Pretoria attempted to persuade Washington DC not to assign African-Americans to U.S. government posts involving travel to South Africa or South West Africa. As early as December 1963, for example, Ulric Haynes, the State Department’s desk officer for South West Africa and the British High Commission territories, was denied a transit visa to visit Bechuanaland. Secretary of State Dean Rusk had to intervene personally, combined with a threat to reduce diplomatic representation between the two countries, before this visa was begrudgingly granted. Although Pretoria later attempted to play down this incident by explaining that Haynes’ visa was temporarily denied as he was the U.S. desk officer for South West Africa, and not because he was an African-American, relations had clearly been damaged.²²

A similar incident occurred in June 1965, when Prime Minister Henrik Verwoerd publicly avowed that he would not permit African-Americans to work in U.S. missile tracking stations located in the Republic. Even though all U.S. personnel based in South Africa at this time were white, the State Department promptly retorted with a statement emphasizing that “(a) the tracking station agreements contain no racial clauses, (b) the South African Government has not approached us [the United States] for modification of these agreements, and (c) the U.S. cannot accept the imposition of racial conditions by the South African Government at [these] tracking facilities.”²³ Again, Pretoria backed down, with diplomats privately explaining that the prime minister’s speech was part of a by-election campaign and for “internal political consumption” only.²⁴

A month later, however, relations hit a new low when South Africa’s acting foreign minister, under instructions from Verwoerd, suggested to U.S. Ambassador Joseph C. Satterthwaite that four senior members of his country team should be transferred from the Republic. The South African government

had “lost confidence” in these officials.²⁵ Washington DC responded by recalling Satterthwaite for consultation and informing Pretoria that the U.S. personnel concerned would not be withdrawn, noting that Pretoria’s request had done “serious harm” to relations between the two countries. The United States threatened “tit-for-tat” reprisals should any of the four officials be subsequently made persona non grata.²⁶ Again, South Africa chose not to push the issue.

Of these attempts by Pretoria to dictate the racial characteristics, or otherwise, of U.S. officials in South Africa, it was a confrontation over naval visits to the Republic that had the most serious ramifications. The United States continued to publicly recognize the strategic and operational importance of U.S. military access to the ports and airports of South Africa.²⁷ Cape Town, for example, had become a regular stop-off point for naval vessels on route to Vietnam, especially those ships that could not navigate the Suez Canal. In the spring of 1965, however, the future of these visits came under question. The United States had requested clearance for the aircraft carrier *USS Independence* to dock at Cape Town. As part of this request, the State Department sought assurances that none of the *Independence*’s crew would be subject to apartheid laws whilst enjoying shore leave.²⁸ After protracted negotiations, a suitable formula was found to provide “multiracial” entertainment for the *Independence*’s sailors. However, the South African government was not willing to extend this assurance to the Republic’s airports to accommodate the needs of the *Independence*’s aircraft pilots. Foreign Minister Muller hinted to Ambassador Satterthwaite that perhaps white-only aircrews could be assigned to these duties, and went on to say that in the future “where groups of Americans wished to use SA facilities they would be required to observe SA rules.”²⁹ The *Independence*’s visit was immediately cancelled, as was a similar call for the *USS Enterprise* planned for November 1965.

In February 1967, persuaded that the *Independence* incident had been a one-off retaliation for the imposition of the 1963 arms embargo, and with assurances from the South African Ministry of Foreign Affairs that all U.S. crew members could now be accommodated on a nonracial basis if visits were resumed, the U.S. Navy scheduled the *USS Franklin D. Roosevelt* to dock at Cape Town.³⁰ Operationally, the use of this port saved the need for an expensive sea refueling of aircraft carriers bound for, or returning from, Vietnam. The *FDR*’s 1967 call, however, was not a success. Pretoria, once the ship had moored, reneged on its assurances, sparking international media interest in the incident and congressional protests back home. Apparently, the extent of the multiracial entertainment permitted by the South African government amounted only to a bus tour of Cape Town. U.S. sailors would be subject to apartheid legislation at all other times.³¹ The *FDR*’s captain, in consultation with the U.S. embassy, cancelled all shore leave.³² The U.S. missile tracking ship, *USNS Sword Knot*, caught up in this incident waited eight days outside Cape Town seeking permission to dock. When the United States failed to get clarification from the South African government over its intentions vis-à-vis shore leave, the *Sword Knot* was ordered to divert to Mombassa instead.³³ This effectively ended all U.S. naval visits to South Africa, a self-imposed ban that stayed in place for the remainder of the apartheid era.³⁴ As with the 1963 arms embargo, the United States was

now willing to sacrifice specific strategic interests in order to demonstrate its opposition to racial discrimination in South Africa.

Alongside this rhetoric, the symbolic acts, and confronting Pretoria to protect U.S. personnel from apartheid laws, the Johnson administration also used private contacts with the South African government to underscore its opposition to apartheid. Undersecretary of State George Ball, for example, used his first meeting with the Republic's ambassador, W.C. Naudé, to make clear, "while there are certain areas of agreement between the South African and American governments, there are diversities which can never be accepted just as Hitlerism and Communism could not be."³⁵ Throughout the entire term of the Johnson administration, U.S. officials gently probed their South African counterparts, seeking and suggesting the need for a moderation of the Republic's internal racial policies.³⁶

However, the immediate priority of the NSAM 295 strategy was South West Africa. The Johnson administration reasoned that any political capital the United States may have in southern Africa would be best spent here. Whereas a major initiative on apartheid would be rejected outright, it was predicted, moderation in South West Africa remained a possibility. The administration thus directed "maximum effort" to encourage Pretoria to change its course in South West Africa. U.S. officials considered it essential that a way be prepared for an "accommodation to the findings" of the imminent ruling from the International Court of Justice.³⁷ In particular, Washington DC sought that the South African government, prior to the ICJ ruling, postpone legislation that would have seen a wholesale export of apartheid to South West Africa, as recommended by the Republic's Odendaal Commission.³⁸ Also prominent in the messages of these diplomats, as per NSAM 295's guidance, was the call for Pretoria to respect and abide by the ICJ's eventual decision.

Johnson's strategy of putting "South West Africa first" produced a victory for "quiet diplomacy" with Pretoria. In April 1965, Prime Minister Verwoerd issued a white paper announcing a delay to the implementation of the Odendaal Commission's recommendations.³⁹ As a Department of State report on the progress of NSAM 295 put it: "Verwoerd came round to full acceptance of our representations with regard to postponement. Citing South African technical reasons for delay, as we had suggested, ... the South African Government [agreed to] 'refrain from action which may be regarded—even theoretically—as detrimental or prejudicial to the alleged rights of the applicant states, or which may unnecessarily aggravate or extend the dispute before the Court.' In effect, all controversial aspects of the Odendaal Report were postponed pending Court judgment."⁴⁰ This minor victory gave legitimacy to Assistant Secretary Williams' expressed opinion, a year later, that "the situation in South Africa has not rigidified irreparably."⁴¹ In this specific instance, at least, Washington DC could claim to have implemented a successful balance of condemnation and engagement.

NSAM 295 and Strategic Interests

Comparing the respective South Africa policies of Kennedy and Johnson, it was in the area of strategic interests where the Johnson administration managed to create

greater coherence than its predecessor. Not only did the latter administration maintain the 1963 arms embargo, it extended this sanction to include a number of "gray area" military sales. Similarly, as demonstrated above, with the suspension of naval visits, Washington DC was also prepared to sacrifice other strategic interests to make a point over apartheid. Johnson even made preparations to terminate the use of its missile tracking stations in the Republic.

This small but significant shift in U.S. policy was not appreciated by the more conservative agencies within the Johnson administration. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, for example, were so alarmed by Bundy issuing NSAM 295 that they sought an immediate revision of this document. Deeming the memorandum's strategy to be "counterproductive to U.S. interests," they likened the situation to previous U.S. attempts "to influence the domestic policies of the Chiang Kai-shek government in 1946 and the Batista government in 1958." In both of these cases, they warned, "the political, military, and economic support necessary to maintain in power anticommunist governments was withheld. This should not be permitted to happen in South Africa."⁴² Yet, in seeking to move away from the status quo, Johnson was prepared to overrule this conservative advice.

One of the first actions of the Johnson administration, in December 1963, was to back an extension of the original August 1963 U.N. arms embargo. The United States supported a Security Council resolution adding munitions and arms and munitions manufacturing equipment to the list of prohibited items.⁴³ With there being a distinct possibility that an oil embargo would also be approved at this session, U.S. diplomats used their support for an extension to the arms embargo as a bargaining chip. They successfully persuaded Security Council members to delay applying a wider range of sanctions against South Africa.⁴⁴ The administration, when casting its affirmative vote, declared that munitions bound for the Republic were already banned under U.S. law. This was as a consequence of the unilateral U.S. arms embargo imposed by President Kennedy, in advance of the initial U.N. action, in August 1963.⁴⁵

The Kennedy embargo had specifically permitted continued sales of military equipment to South Africa, as long as these weapons could not be used to enforce apartheid. There has been some confusion over the interpretation of this policy in the months following Kennedy's decision. Assuming office, the Johnson administration managed to reduce this ambiguity in addition to consciously ending any nonapartheid related, but nevertheless symbolic, sales of military equipment. During its first month in office, for instance, the Johnson administration came under pressure to approve a "shopping list" of arms requested by Pretoria. These sales were to be part of a potential barter arrangement. Exports would be used to reduce payments due to Pretoria for completed uranium shipments. Seeking to delay these payments because of balance of payments difficulties, Kennedy had entered into negotiations, exploring the possibility of an "arms for uranium" swap.⁴⁶ The Johnson administration terminated these negotiations due to its more aggressive interpretation of the arms embargo. Pretoria was informed that Washington DC would honor existing contracts for air-to-air missiles and torpedoes, as per the wording of August 1963 unilateral action, but it would

not approve any future sales of this kind. At the same time, the South African government was advised that its request for military transport aircraft was declined.⁴⁷ Gone now was the Kennedy policy of exempting strategic arms sales to the Republic that were deemed important for the "defense of the free world." The Johnson administration was arriving at a position where all weaponry would be embargoed.

Perhaps the best illustration of this revised approach came with Johnson's rejection of an export license for supplying submarines to the South African navy. President Kennedy had procrastinated over this decision, encouraging the U.S. Department of Defense formally to reopen sales negotiations in January 1964.⁴⁸ The Joint Chiefs of Staff supported the sale. They noted that "essential military interests lie in the strategic geographic location of South Africa," and a need to deny this location "to the communists." In addition, the JCS argued, "there remains the need to maintain a rapport with the South African military to provide for cooperation and assistance." Consequently, they sought a return to the original Kennedy position: "In the application of U.S. arms policy, it should be possible to distinguish between weapons suitable for use or likely to be used for internal repression and weapons which, by their very nature, would be applicable only to external defense." Submarines, it was argued, clearly belonged to this latter category.⁴⁹ Similar arguments were made over Pretoria's request to purchase 16 Lockheed antisubmarine aircraft from the United States later in 1964. The Department of Defense supported this application to bolster their ally's military capacity; the Department of the Treasury pointed to the US\$64 million purchase price in terms of the balance of payments position of the United States; Commerce noted that if Lockheed did not win this contract it would go to this company's French competitors instead; whilst congressional representatives from Lockheed's home state lobbied the administration repeatedly in favor of the sale.⁵⁰

Ultimately, however, President Johnson rejected all these arguments. Although the sale of these submarines and aircraft could be justified as per Kennedy's August 1963 wording, the administration recognized the symbolic nature of such transactions. The United States did not want to be seen as contributing to the arming of a government that used its security forces to racially oppress its own citizens. As the decision was ultimately "a political one," in Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara's assessment, with South Africa being important to the Cold War strategy of the United States, but not "essential to our national interest," Johnson opted to tighten the arms embargo. Negotiations over the sale of the submarines were "dampened out," and the Lockheed aircraft export licenses denied.⁵¹

The Johnson administration also tightened the U.S. position on selling goods to South Africa with the potential for dual civilian/military use: so-called gray area items. In February 1966, for example, Cessna was denied an export license to sell US\$1.5 million worth of marine patrol aircraft to the South African government.⁵² Likewise, General Electric, as a third party, was refused permission to sell aircraft engines to Dassault of France, as the ultimate destination of the completed *Mystère 20* aircraft was to be the Republic. In both cases there were fears that these civilian planes could easily be converted to military use.⁵³

This gray area position of the Johnson administration is summed up well by a memo written by Robert Komer, the president's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs. Referring to the Cessna case, Komer reasoned: "To me the public relations disadvantages tend to outweigh the arguments that the sale is justified because it will help our balance of payments or that 'if the U.S. won't sell, someone else will.' ... Wouldn't the small advantage to our balance of payments be more than offset by widespread domestic and international criticism of the USG [U.S. government]?"⁵⁴ Although plenty of civilian aircraft were licensed for sale to South Africa by the Johnson administration, the burden of proof now rested on the seller to demonstrate that their product was not destined for military use.

Commenting, in 1966, on this tighter interpretation of the arms embargo, Prime Minister Verwoerd asked of the new U.S. ambassador to Pretoria, William M. Rountree, whom he now expected to protect "Western civilization" in Africa? Verwoerd reiterated his government's support for the United States in Vietnam, Berlin, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and against communist encroachment elsewhere in the world. South Africa was "the strongest anti-communist country in Africa." Yet, despite this fact, the prime minister observed, the United States was denying his government weapons enabling it to play its full role in the Cold War.⁵⁵

Another aspect of the Johnson administration clarifying the 1963 arms embargo was through limiting visits of high-level South Africa military personnel to the United States. In May 1965, the South African government asked Washington DC why one of its generals, Rudolph Hiemstra, had been denied a visa to travel to the United States. It was requested that this visa application be reconsidered.⁵⁶ The problem arose because General Hiemstra was about to become the head of the South African Defense Force, and the State Department had wanted to avoid the symbolism and the public relations difficulties that would be associated with such a visit. Despite these misgivings, Pretoria managed to collude with the Department of Defense in August 1965, and the United States Air Force (USAF) officially requested permission for the general to tour several of its facilities in the United States, despite the earlier visa refusal. In support of its request, the USAF cited a "direct interest in maintaining cordial relations with South Africa."⁵⁷ It required the president's national security staff to back the State Department's original decision in order for the visa refusal to remain in place. The net outcome, however, was a further strengthening of the arms embargo. Official military contacts, at this level, were at an end.

The most immediately vulnerable strategic interest the United States had in South Africa was its missile tracking stations. These U.S. facilities were pivotal to the growing and prestigious U.S. space exploration program, and important to the Department of Defense for its missile development.⁵⁸ President Kennedy, as part of his attempt to gain the best of both worlds, had approved the renewal of the lease on these facilities in 1961.⁵⁹ Contingencies, however, had been explored, should the United States have to abandon these tracking stations at short notice.⁶⁰ The Johnson administration was more cautious than its predecessor over these amenities.

Elements of the administration fought a rearguard action in order to save the tracking stations. Ragnar Rollefson, director of the State Department's Office of International Scientific Affairs, for example, informed Assistant Secretary Williams in 1964 that "Southern Africa is the most critical single area abroad for the U.S. space program." He estimated that the tracking stations were "a critical requirement" for at least the next five years, recommending that these facilities be maintained for the foreseeable future. This assessment was made notwithstanding that such a U.S. commitment "may limit severely our freedom of action in dealing with other critical problems created by the circumstances in that area [i.e. apartheid]."⁶¹ Yet, the National Security Council decided not to risk exposure of this kind over such a prolonged time in South Africa.⁶² In March, 1964, NSAM 295 dictated "The National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Department of Defense should immediately undertake such planning for and construction of alternative stand-by facilities as would be required if it became necessary to evacuate the facilities in South Africa on six months' notice."⁶³ The agencies were given 18 months, to two years, to meet this objective.⁶⁴ A review of the NSAM 295 compiled a year later estimated that NASA would be able to undertake the potential requisite evacuation by June 1966.⁶⁵ Again, the Johnson administration was much more willing than its predecessor to sacrifice U.S. strategic interests, rather than be beholden to a government practising apartheid.

NSAM 295 and Economic Interests

The closest the Johnson administration came to imposing economic sanctions, beyond those sales restricted by the arms embargo, was its decision in March 1964 to implement a partial withdrawal of federal assistance to companies trading with the Republic. NSAM 295 instructed, "U.S. Government lending agencies will for the time being suspend action on applications for loans or investment guarantees with respect to South Africa."⁶⁶ The U.S. Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank would now limit its activities with respect to commercial transactions between the two countries. Washington DC did not want to risk losing public money should U.N. sanctions become inevitable or the Republic succumb to political unrest. Chase Manhattan, for example, was denied a US\$7 million Ex-Im Bank political risk guarantee in order to facilitate a loan to the South African Palabora Mining Company (which wished to purchase U.S. manufactured drilling machinery).⁶⁷ Chase, however, was not informed of the reasoning behind this refusal, nor was the revised Ex-Im Bank position made public. Again, the Johnson administration wished to reserve the right to swiftly review its position in light of impending developments, the ICJ's South West Africa decision, in particular.⁶⁸ Consequently, the official stance of the U.S. government remained to "neither encourage nor discourage investment in South Africa."⁶⁹

Two specific areas where the Johnson administration felt it was not in the interests of the United States to hinder commercial activity were nuclear energy generation and civil aviation. In 1965, the U.S. firm Allis Chalmers delivered a 20-megawatt nuclear reactor to the Republic, and fuel to power it. The

administration was faced with the reality that the reactor had already been sold to the South African government, but a decision needed to be made over whether to approve the associated consignments of enriched uranium. In the absence of commercial U.S. sanctions against the Republic, and after receiving advice that withholding the reactor or fuel may constitute a breach of contract, the sale of these goods progressed unimpeded.⁷⁰ The administration did ask, however, due to the sensitivity of these items, that the transaction take place with a minimum of publicity and that the fuel be shipped after the upcoming U.N. General Assembly session and subsequent to the U.S. General Election of that year.⁷¹ Stable nuclear relations with the Republic were likewise nurtured 18 months later with the decision to renew the Nuclear Energy Agreement between the two countries. This treaty guaranteed a continued supply of enriched uranium to the Republic's Atomic Energy Board.⁷²

The Johnson administration signed a second treaty with South Africa in 1968. This agreement extended civil aviation links between South Africa and the United States.⁷³ Clauses within an existing aviation agreement were invoked, providing South African Airways with access to New York in return for two additional routes from the United States to the Republic.⁷⁴ Again, in the absence of any commercial sanctions, it was thought that this business development should not be hindered.

Indeed, there was no doubt concerning the Johnson administration's overall public position on further economic sanctions against Pretoria. U.S. diplomats in the United Nations counseled against imposing symbolic, yet ineffective, measures. Instead, Ambassador Stevenson advocated "careful and patient efforts." He reasoned: "It is difficult, I know, to talk of long-range approaches when the pain and the provocation are so present and so intense. But in dealing with so intractable an issue there are no easy solutions."⁷⁵ Assistant Secretary Williams outlined three key reasons why the United States rejected economic sanctions: "(1) The problems of the legal basis of such actions" (Washington DC did not consider apartheid to be a threat to international peace and, as such, U.N. Chapter VII measures could not be invoked); "(2) the problem of economic effectiveness" (the South African economy simply was not that vulnerable to a trade embargo); and "(3) the problem of psychological effectiveness" (sanctions would serve to harden attitudes in the Republic, closing channels of persuasion).⁷⁶ The issue of enforcement was also used as an argument against further sanctions. In the Joint Chiefs of Staff's assessment, "a blockade against South Africa alone would require four carrier task forces (4 carriers, 24 destroyers and 3 submarines), and treble this number if extended beyond six months because of rotational and repair requirements." They counseled, "in face of present U.S. military involvement in Vietnam, it would be impossible to participate in a military operation of this magnitude ..." The United Kingdom's ability to sustain sanctions, notably an estimated loss of US\$ 840 million in its balance of payments, was also put forward by the JCS as a reason not to impose punitive economic measures.⁷⁷

Countering the antiapartheid sanctions lobby, the Johnson administration stressed the potential positive effects of continued economic engagement. This was a line of reasoning developed more fully by later U.S. administrations, but

Mennen Williams, as early as 1966, was talking of “economic forces breaking down segregationist practices,” with U.S. companies operating “progressive” employment practices in the Republic providing an example to their South African counterparts.⁷⁸ Meanwhile Assistant Secretary of State for Commerce, Alexander Towbridge considered the “maintenance of a significant [American] business community in South Africa may provide a useful channel of communication with influential South African private and official circles.”⁷⁹

Yet, in promoting these arguments, the Johnson administration had to absorb considerable pressure at the United Nations. The vast majority of members, led by the Afro-Asian bloc, sought immediate sanctions. The Johnson administration, however, remained unmoved. The only public hint that the U.S. may, in the future, bow to the majority view came in 1964. Responding to Pretoria’s continued refusal to cooperate with the United Nations in South West Africa, the United States voted in favor of a Security Council resolution commissioning a study of potential actions that could be employed against Pretoria, should South Africa continue to ignore the U.N.’s advances.⁸⁰ A similar study was being conducted back in Washington DC.⁸¹ Yet, in casting his affirmative vote for resolution 191, Ambassador Stevenson was clear that his action “represents in no way an advanced commitment of my Government.”⁸²

In the absence of further sanctions, the Republic’s economy boomed. Between 1960 and 1970, South Africa’s gross domestic product rose by an average of 5 percent per annum.⁸³ U.S. corporations benefited from this economic growth. Xerox, Kimberley Clark, and ITT were some of the better-known names buying into the South African market at this time.⁸⁴ Collectively, U.S. companies that invested in this economy enjoyed average profits of around 16 percent per annum, compared to equivalent worldwide returns of 9.4 percent in this same period.⁸⁵ Higher returns were available in the mining and smelting sector, averaging 43 percent between 1963 and 1967.⁸⁶ Apparently oblivious to the general hardening of U.S. policy toward South Africa, Department of Commerce officials could occasionally be found promoting American investment in this market. One 1964 article, written by Washington’s senior commercial officer in Johannesburg, for example, declared “the green light is on . . . the U.S. businessman should seize the opportunity to obtain a larger share of both the consumer and industrial markets” in South Africa.⁸⁷ American companies took his advice. U.S. exports to South Africa rose from US\$288 million in 1960 to US\$563 million by the end of the decade.⁸⁸ If the U.S. government had decided to limit its exposure in South Africa, U.S. business had not.

Namibia, the ICJ Ruling, and Policy Revisions

The series of policies implemented above, following the guidance of NSAM 295, had brought the Johnson administration into the summer of 1966 with its southern Africa policy intact. The United States was now less vulnerable on the issue of apartheid. Contingencies had been made vis-à-vis the tracking stations and Ex-Im Bank liabilities had been reined in. From this position, the administration hoped to explore with Pretoria a perceived “flexibility,” and

the “possibility of accommodation,” with respect to South West Africa.⁸⁹ This initiative, most importantly, would be underwritten by the imminent ruling of the ICJ. In effect, Washington DC considered that it had positioned itself as an honest broker for the forthcoming diplomatic showdown. Reinforcing this strategy, minor points of leverage had also been built. The resumption of Ex-Im Bank guarantees could be offered to Pretoria as an incentive to participate in talks, as could a relaxation of the ban on gray area military/civilian equipment sales. The fact that Pretoria had agreed to suspend the implementation of the Odendaal Report prior to the ICJ ruling, at Washington DC’s bequest, was seen as a good omen.

All this preparation, however, was abruptly “knocked on the head,” in the words of Joseph Palmer, the new U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs.⁹⁰ On 18 July 1966, the ICJ delivered its long-awaited verdict on the international status of South West Africa. The decision was an anticlimax. Instead of determining whether Pretoria, as a consequence of its racial policies, had relinquished the right to administer this territory, the Court rejected Ethiopia and Liberia’s right to bring their case to the Hague. The majority decision found that the applicant states had failed to establish an interest in the subject matter of their claims, and accordingly no substantial ruling was made. In effect, the Court found that South Africa had no obligations toward former individual members of the League of Nations.⁹¹

The 1966 ICJ decision undermined the central premise of NSAM 295. The United States was denied the legal backing it sought to place pressure on Pretoria, calling for negotiations. Indeed, instead of engaging with the international community over South West Africa, Pretoria regarded the Court’s decision as a victory, and vindication for its continued administration in Windhoek. Enjoying what it interpreted as a judicially confirmed freedom from international responsibility, the South African government set about implementing the delayed Odendaal Commission recommendations. Washington DC had lost its position as an honest broker.

Startled by the ICJ’s opinion, the U.N. General Assembly took matters into its own hands. Highlighting evidence that the administration in South West Africa had acted “contrary to the manner of the Mandate,” resolution 2145 of 27 October 1966 declared this mandate terminated, “and that henceforth South West Africa comes under the direct responsibility of the United Nations.”⁹² The United States supported this resolution.⁹³ Before the General Assembly, U.S. Ambassador Arthur Goldberg accused Pretoria of an unacceptable “continuing material breach of obligations incumbent upon the mandatory power.”⁹⁴

By supporting resolution 2145, Washington DC had moved ahead of its key allies, the United Kingdom and France having abstained on this vote. The United States likewise “condemned” and “censured” the Republic of South Africa over its government’s arrest and trial of nationalist activists in the newly renamed territory of Namibia.⁹⁵ Yet, despite supporting the revocation of the South West Africa mandate, Washington DC was not yet convinced of the need for any further punitive sanctions. The Johnson administration continued its pro-engagement arguments highlighted above. Goldberg, for example, warned

the General Assembly: "We must avoid mere paper resolutions recommending action beyond the capacity of this organization to achieve ..." Instead, the ambassador sought measures that "bring relief and support to the people of South West Africa."⁹⁶ He advocated, for instance, that the U.N. concentrate its efforts on providing educational programs for Namibians studying abroad.⁹⁷ Washington DC sought to avoid "dramatic confrontations," believing "it is not too late for all concerned to work together for a peaceful and a practical solution to this problem ..." It was essential the United Nations should concentrate on "keeping doors open" for future negotiations with Pretoria.⁹⁸

In effect, the Johnson administration's South Africa policy was now at a loss. The strategy of focusing the bulk of U.S. influence on Namibia, waiting for the ICJ ruling, had backfired. The South African government's newfound confidence in its governance of this territory, and over apartheid in general, ruled out any likelihood of compromise. Even before the ICJ opinion, Assistant Secretary Williams had talked of "a frustratingly difficult set of policy considerations to juggle."⁹⁹ Now, Pretoria's increased intransigence made Washington DC's position even less viable. An enforced policy review ensued.

The administration's National Policy Paper drawn up in 1968 as part of this reassessment acknowledged the U.S. government's difficult position. It identified four key objectives for the United States:

- continue pressures to move towards racial equality and majority rule;
- continue to avoid conspicuous association as would result in U.S. identification with repressive racial policy;
- where not inconsistent with the forgoing, continue contacts and relationships of material benefit to the United States (e.g. in the field of trade, scientific and technical exchange, routine naval visits, tracking stations, etc.); and
- encourage wider exposure of South Africans to the outside world through cultural contacts and exchanges.

Yet, the paper recognized that these "objectives cannot be satisfactorily achieved either by intensified pressures on, or by closer association with, the white minority regimes of the area." The prognosis was not good. The paper assessed that the United States was restricted to a policy that could only be "damage-limiting for the range of U.S. interests in southern Africa," with the best that could be expected being "some slight constructive influence on long-trends in the area."¹⁰⁰

This policy revision also opened up old bureaucratic battles within the Johnson administration. Secretary for the Navy, Paul H. Nitze, for example, argued that the United States was now "paying a direct and immediate cost for our declaratory objectives without a reasonable hope of actually promoting them through the policy." He suggested that the administration should instead focus on the build up of Soviet naval activity in the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean.¹⁰¹ The Joint Chiefs of Staff also called for renewed military association with the South Africa government.¹⁰² Even the National Policy Paper itself advocated a rethink over the ban of naval visits to the Republic.¹⁰³ Elsewhere, NASA was dragging its feet over making contingencies for the evacuation of its tracking stations located in

the Republic (and even requesting a US\$2.5 million expansion to its Krugersdorp site), while the Ex-Im Bank had once again begun to grant "short-to-medium term guarantees" with respect to South African commercial transactions.¹⁰⁴ The result was that the consistency the Johnson administration had managed to build over its South Africa policy began to unravel: a fact acknowledged by National Security Council staff. A 1967 NSC briefing observed: "Facing the problems of opposing tendencies—to associate with South Africa or to disengage from it entirely—the pressures have been strong to take actions which swing between the two extremes. A fully consistent policy is probably impossible at this time, since the policies at each end of the spectrum are contradictory but nevertheless have strong attraction and considerable support."¹⁰⁵ Washington DC was struggling to come up with a workable alternative to its now defunct South West Africa first strategy.

In reality, there was no more time for the administration to pick up the pieces. Johnson's announcement, in March 1968, that he would not seek his party's renomination for president called time on the policy review.¹⁰⁶ Overall, the Johnson administration had succeeded in bringing a degree of much needed coherence to this element of U.S. foreign policy. The 1963 arms embargo, for example, was now more defined. A stand had been taken. It was clear, with respect to core military relations between the United States and South Africa, that Washington DC was now willing to sacrifice significant elements of its strategic interests in the Republic in order to promote human rights.

Yet, the decision to avoid concentrated diplomatic activity over Pretoria's domestic racial policies, in favor of building maximum influence over the issue of South West Africa, had collapsed spectacularly as a consequence of the 1966 ICJ ruling. At this point, it is true, that the administration was left with nothing more than a holding operation. Few believed that this position could be sustained.

When activists from the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee occupied the South African embassy in Washington DC during March 1966, National Security Council staffer Rick Haynes predicted: "This is only the beginning . . ."¹⁰⁷ Indeed, it was during Johnson's watch that the U.S. Congress first felt compelled to hold hearings on the executive's performance in southern Africa.¹⁰⁸ Reacting to these new pressures, U.S. policy makers now began to factor in how decisions would play amongst domestic constituencies when making their deliberations.¹⁰⁹ One of these individuals was NSC staffer Harold H. Saunders. Having seen his government's South Africa strategy collapse in the wake of the ICJ decision, and considering the 1968 National Policy Paper to offer little by the way of progress, Saunders asked "whether time won't soon run out on this holding operation." Answering his own question, he wrote: "I suspect it will—both in our own black community and in Africa."¹¹⁰

In the meantime, it would be left to the Nixon administration to try and forge a new way forward in southern Africa, seeking a new method of balancing conflicting U.S. interests.

CHAPTER 5

“THE WHITES ARE HERE TO STAY ...”: THE NIXON AND FORD ADMINISTRATIONS, 1969–1977

The southern Africa strategy of the Nixon and Ford administrations has always courted controversy. Beginning with a 1972 *New York Times* article, this policy has amassed a range of comment, almost all of it negative in tone.¹ Most scholars associate the Nixon and Ford years with at least a “tilt” toward white rule in southern Africa. More radical interpretations suggest this policy resulted in a “full embrace” of the minority rule governments.² Drawing such conclusions, many critics focus on just one phrase from a leaked 1969 National Security Council report. They home in on policy option two of the Interdepartmental Group for Africa’s response to National Security Study Memorandum number 39 (NSSM39). This option suggested that “the whites are here to stay ...” in southern Africa.³ Campaigners saw these words as symbolizing the West’s moral intransigence. The United States and its allies were accused of colluding with an abuse of human rights in order to protect strategic and economic interests.⁴

This chapter argues that although criticism is due when analyzing the South Africa policies of the Nixon and Ford administrations, scholars should avoid being blinkered by the phrase “the whites are here to stay.” Furthermore, NSSM39’s option two should not be dismissed out of hand. Despite charges to the contrary, in this instance, the NSC response to NSSM39 did not recommend a simple embrace of the status quo. Option two was more nuanced than this. It sought a combination of positive and negative sanctions in order to enhance communication between the parties that could in turn instigate ongoing reforms of apartheid. Intellectually, at least, option two offered an holistic strategy challenging minority rule, whilst at the same time protecting U.S. material interests in the region.

However, whilst the policy emerging from the NSSM39 report should not be misrepresented as naked support for white power on the southern tip of Africa, this chapter does argue that Nixon and Ford were both culpable in failing to adequately protect U.S. human rights interests in southern Africa. This is because

option two was never seriously implemented. The Interdepartmental Group for Africa's recommendations were not tested. The strategy was never meaningfully adopted by the bureaucracy; the policy's goals were never communicated sufficiently to its target audience in southern Africa (or to the bureaucracy back home); the range of positive and negative sanctions actually put in place were weak, encouraging no one in Africa to alter their position; and there was an absence of leadership from senior members of the administrations, starving the strategy of any source of authority. As a consequence, NSSM39 did indeed ultimately default into support of the status quo in southern Africa, but through neglect, not design.

And this failure of implementation cost the United States. The assumption that the whites were here to stay was proved dramatically incorrect in 1975, when a military coup in Lisbon prompted the decolonization of Portuguese Africa. Due to the policy vacuum created by NSSM39's nonimplementation, the Ford administration had difficulty responding to this turn of events. Indeed, unsure of its footing, Washington DC found itself backing the wrong side in a Cold War fuelled military conflict in Angola.

This chapter is about charting the rise and fall of the NSSM39 strategy. The first of five sections will provide a background to the South Africa policy of the Nixon and Ford administrations. It will highlight events in the Republic that policy makers had to respond to, as well as noting domestic pressures that were building on this issue. The second section looks at the NSC's response to NSSM39. Here the Interdepartmental Group's report is analyzed in detail, identifying the options considered and the decisions taken. The chapter then moves on to the (partial) implementation of the NSSM39 recommendations: highlighting actions in the human rights, strategic, and economic spheres. Section four provides the substantive evidence for the chapter's main argument that NSSM39's failure can be largely accounted for by an absence of implementation. In turn, the administrations' deficient communication, their inadequate choice of incentives and punishments, and a lack of leadership will be discussed. The final section of the chapter will then look at U.S. policy after the 1974 Portuguese coup. How did the U.S. debacle in Angola and the subsequent diplomatic initiative of 1976 impact U.S. bilateral relations with Pretoria? Overall, the chapter demonstrates that the Nixon and Ford administrations were not serious about tackling apartheid. The opportunity for a bolder policy toward South Africa, one based on positive sanctions, had been missed. U.S. diplomatic authority in the region was damaged as a consequence.

Homeland Self-Government, an Emerging Black Opposition, and Growing Congressional Interest

Bolstered by its successful consolidation of apartheid over 20 years, the National Party in South Africa was to spend its third decade in power attempting to entrench its separation of the races on a constitutional basis. There was some talk about a new political dispensation for "coloreds" and "Indians" within the Republic, but the bulk of the government's attention during this period was

dedicated to preparing the "African" homelands for "independence." Legislation in 1970, for example, assigned every "African" in the Republic "citizenship" to one or other of the Bantustans.⁵ As a consequence, the legal rights of blacks remaining in "white" South Africa were minimal. Indeed, the forced removals program, transporting "surplus" Africans from the greater South Africa to the homelands, accelerated during the 1970s. Apartheid was apparently here to stay. The Transkei was the first Bantustan to be granted "independence" by Pretoria in 1976.

Alongside these constitutional reforms, the Republic's government also continued its uncompromising stance on suppressing any internal dissent. The African National Congress of South Africa and the Pan Africanist Congress continued to be successfully neutralized, and external threats of guerrilla incursions contained. The South African Police made full use of the impressive array of security legislation at its disposal. There were signs, however, of a new, younger, black opposition beginning to organize after the "lost decade" of the 1960s. Labor strikes based around Durban in 1973, for example, temporarily unsettled white power, as did on a longer-term basis the development of the black consciousness movement. The Soweto uprising was to occur at the end of the period covered by this chapter.

Voices challenging apartheid could also be heard in the United States. As the 1970s progressed, antiapartheid arguments began to be aired closer to, or actually in, state and federal decision-making fora. For example, the American Committee on Africa, which had been organizing grass roots campaigns since the 1950s, joined with several church groups in 1972 to establish the Washington Office on Africa. This development provided the U.S. antiapartheid movement with permanent institutional capacity within the capital. Likewise, also during 1972, the Interfaith Committee on Corporate Responsibility was founded. U.S. businesses were put on notice that their activities in South Africa would now be closely monitored. A year earlier, Polaroid had become the first U.S. company to instigate a code of conduct seeking to establish fair employment practices amongst South African workers associated with its business.⁶ The U.S. antiapartheid movement was beginning to come of age.⁷

It was the U.S. Congress, however, that applied the greatest pressure on the Nixon and Ford administrations vis-à-vis policy toward South Africa. This pressure can largely be accounted for by the establishment of the Congressional Black Caucus in 1971, and the fact that one of this group's cofounders, Detroit representative Charles Diggs, had been appointed chair of the House Subcommittee on Africa. Diggs used this position to hold a series of public hearings on topics ranging from U.S. business interests in South Africa and the operations of the U.S. Export-Import Bank, through to the implementation of the arms embargo.⁸ For the first time, U.S. government officials had to publicly answer detailed questions concerning their South Africa policy. Indeed, Diggs' strategy of public accountability caught on. Charles Rangel of New York, for instance, a fellow member of the Congressional Black Caucus, used his seat on the House Subcommittee on Aeronautics and Space Technology to require NASA to explain its continued presence in South Africa.⁹

Despite these congressional hearings generating publicity for the antiapartheid cause, no legislative acts followed. Rangel's bills seeking to close the NASA tracking stations, for instance, failed to get the required sponsorship in the Senate.¹⁰ Indeed, the Senate seemed largely uninterested in the apartheid issue. Its subcommittee on Africa remained relatively inactive during the Nixon years.¹¹ It was only when Senator Edward Kennedy took up the case of the U.S. sugar subsidy granted to the Republic that Congress, as a whole, voted on a South African issue. Kennedy suggested that the termination of this sugar subsidy could be a significant moral gesture: a warning shot across the bows of the government in Pretoria.¹² Bringing the labor conditions of the Republic's sugar workers to the Senate's attention drew considerable support for this bill, but the measure was eventually defeated in both chambers of Congress.¹³

One should not, however, overemphasize the influence of these embryonic antiapartheid moves within the U.S. Congress. The House hearings and the sugar subsidy vote were significant milestones in the U.S. antiapartheid campaign, but it would still be more than a decade before South Africa would generate significant and sustained debate in the federal legislature. Indeed, it could be argued that, at this time, conservative views on southern Africa held greater sway amongst members of Congress. Lobbyists retained by both U.S. corporate interests and the South Africa government generally won more legislative victories than their antiapartheid counterparts.¹⁴ There was also an underlying congressional sympathy for the anticommunist stance of the white minority governments, and, no doubt, their policies of segregation too from more conservative members of this body. As David Newsom, Nixon's first Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, remarked: "There are a few of our citizens who view the white domination in southern Africa with a certain nostalgia."¹⁵

It was against this background of an expanding black opposition in South Africa, and a growing antiapartheid movement in the United States that the Nixon and Ford administrations had to formulate their response to Pretoria's continuing racial experiment. Continuity across these two administrations was provided by Henry Kissinger, who served as national security advisor to the president (1969–1975) and secretary of state (1973–1977). For the bulk of this period, the nature of the South Africa policy of the United States can be traced back to decisions taken during the 1969 NSSM39 review.

The Report in Response to National Security Study Memorandum 39

Henry Kissinger issued National Security Study Memorandum number 39, on behalf of President Nixon, on 10 April 1969. This document ordered a comprehensive evaluation of U.S. southern Africa policy with respect to: "(1) the background and future prospects of major problems in the area; (2) alternative views of the U.S. interest in Southern Africa; and (3) the full range of basic strategies and policy options open to the United States." The study would be conducted by the National Security Council's Interdepartmental Group for Africa, which comprised representatives from the Departments of State,

Commerce, and Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Agency for International Development, the Treasury, and NASA, as well as NSC staff. The Group's response to NSSM39 was to be completed for review by 25 April 1969.¹⁶

It is worth noting at this point that the commissioning of this policy evaluation was not a result of southern Africa being a priority for the Nixon administration. NSSM39 was only one of many such memoranda issued by Kissinger. Vietnam was the subject of NSSM1, with the series running through to NSSM206, which analyzed U.S. relations with Canada.¹⁷ However, even if NSSM39 was never destined to inform Kissinger's core global strategy, this review did represent the most comprehensive consideration undertaken, to date, of the options open to Washington DC with respect to minority rule in southern Africa.

The study started by confirming the reality that the racial policies practiced by Pretoria, Salisbury, and Lisbon had now become a "major international issue." There was concern that this conflict could bring "major violence," and significant communist intervention. Although it was concluded that the United States had "no vital security interests in the region," five key objectives for this part of the world were advanced.¹⁸ "Arranged without intent to imply priority," these were:

- to improve the U.S. standing in black Africa and internationally on the racial issue.
- to minimize the likelihood of escalation of violence in the area and risk of U.S. involvement.
- to minimize the opportunities for the USSR and Communist China to exploit the racial issue in the region for propaganda advantage and to gain political influence with black governments and liberation movements.
- to encourage moderation of the current rigid racial and colonial policies of the white regimes.
- to protect economic, scientific and strategic interests and opportunities in the region, including the orderly marketing of South Africa's gold production.

It was recognized, as previous administrations had, that "these objectives in some instances are conflicting and irreconcilable."¹⁹

Responding to this brief, the study outlined a choice of five potential policies, ranging from greater cooperation with the white regimes through to a complete withdrawal from the region.²⁰ Option one, for example, based on a paper penned by former Secretary of State Dean Acheson argued for a "closer association with the white regimes to protect and enhance our economic, strategic and scientific interests."²¹ This approach favored a resumption of uninhibited relations with Pretoria, Salisbury, and Lisbon. Given that it was unlikely that Washington DC could have any real impact on the racial situation, option one contended, U.S. material interests should be maximized. The arms embargo could be relaxed to permit the sale of items of common defense value; naval visits should be resumed; the NASA and Department of Defense tracking stations retained; and a promotion of trade and investment between the two countries undertaken supported by full U.S. Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank facilities.²² Acheson was advocating a return to the position where the United States would prioritize its tangible interests in the region, and not be overly distracted by moral considerations.²³

At the other end of the policy spectrum, option four proposed a positive alignment with the independent states of Africa. The premise of this approach maintained that the United States "cannot influence the white states for constructive change and therefore increasing violence is likely. Only by cutting our ties with the white regimes can we protect our standing on the race issue in black Africa and internationally. Since our tangible interests are not vital, this is a reasonable price to pay." Operational examples associated with this approach included the reduction of U.S. diplomatic representation with the white states; a strict application of the arms embargo; the removal of all tracking stations; the active discouragement of U.S. investment in the minority rule economies; and increased bilateral aid to the black states of the region.²⁴ Such measures would bring the United States in line with what a majority of members were demanding at the United Nations.

Option five made the case for disassociating the United States from the conflict altogether. The premise in this case claimed that the "racial confrontation in southern Africa is unmanageable and potentially dangerous and will grow worse despite any effort we might make." Washington DC would thus lower its profile in the area to a minimum and "avoid identification with either side."²⁵

The real choice for U.S. decision makers, however, did not concern options one, four, or five. Instead, future relations with South Africa and with minority rule in the region would rest with preferences between option two and option three. The study of the Interdepartmental Group for Africa reflected this reality. The bulk of the NSSM39 report is given over to considering these two approaches.

Option three proposed a "codification and extension of present policy"; an evolution of the southern Africa strategy as implemented by the Johnson administration.²⁶ Indeed, option three closely follows measures proposed earlier, in a 1968 State Department report, which had been shelved as a consequence of President Johnson not seeking reelection.²⁷ The rationale for option three was that the United States could not "significantly influence the domestic policies of the white states; nor is there any indication of internal change." However, maintaining "a posture on the racial question acceptable to the black states of the region and elsewhere need not entail giving up all material interests in the white states."²⁸ Thus, Washington DC would clearly voice U.S. opposition to the incumbent regimes' racial policies, but "correct relations" with these governments could be fostered in less contentious areas.

An approach of this kind would involve a strict application of the arms embargo; a retention of the tracking stations, but with alternative sites prepared elsewhere; for the United States to neither encourage nor discourage investment in the region, but to provide low-key Ex-Im Bank support for businesses; continued efforts to persuade South Africa to withdraw from Namibia supported by an official discouragement of U.S. commercial activity in this territory; and "discreet" contacts with liberation movements, "and flexible economic assistance programs in the black states."²⁹ Interestingly, option three's operational examples also included recommending the quiet resumption of U.S. naval visits to South African ports. This policy modification had also been recommended by the earlier Johnson administration report.³⁰

Despite the above efforts to balance U.S. material and human rights interests, the NSSM39 study conceded that implementation of option three was not without risk. There was a danger that no party in the conflict would be satisfied with the position of the United States. As the Kennedy and Johnson administrations had previously found, it would be difficult to deliver convincing rhetoric condemning apartheid and racism, whilst at the same time pursuing strategic and economic cooperation with Pretoria, Salisbury, and Lisbon. Potential charges of expediency and hypocrisy could result. Option three did have the advantage, however, that U.S. material interests would be safeguarded, with a flexibility maintained, permitting contacts with both black and white groups in the region.³¹

Unlike option three, option two proposed an adaptation of past policy toward southern Africa. It recommended a closer association with both black and white groups in the region. The premise of option two was:

The whites are here to stay and the only way that constructive change can come about is through them. There is no hope for the blacks to gain the political rights they seek through violence, which will only lead to chaos and increased opportunities for the communists. We can, by selective relaxation of our stance toward the white regimes, encourage some modification of their current racial and colonial policies and through more substantial economic assistance to the black states ... help to draw the two groups together and exert some influence on both for peaceful change. Our tangible interests form a basis for our contacts in the region, and these can be maintained at an acceptable political cost.³²

The idea was to engage both parties in order to promote communication and negotiation, whilst also protecting U.S. material interests. Strategic contacts and business investment would form the very basis of this communication with the white regimes, with increased development aid winning over the independent African states.

The operational examples suggested for option two concentrated largely on building an influence relationship with the minority rule governments. The arms embargo, for instance would still be enforced, but engagement encouraged through the liberal treatment of equipment that could serve either military or civilian purposes. Likewise, naval visits were to resume; the tracking stations should remain "as long as required"; Ex-Im Bank restrictions would be removed, alongside a renewed promotion of trade and investment; a broad range of exchange programs with white and black groups would be sponsored; and, whilst the U.S. legal position on Namibia would be maintained, this issue would be played down, and accommodation encouraged, in the United Nations.³³

Option two did not necessarily envisage immediate change in southern Africa. The key was to secure modest but tangible reform from the white regimes. Such reforms could be rewarded with "broadening the scope of our relations and contacts gradually." There was a willingness to "accept political arrangements short of guaranteed progress toward majority rule, provided that they assure broadened political participation in some form by the whole population." In this sense, option two was a long-term strategy. As the study put it, "This option accepts, at least over a 3 to 5 year period, the prospect

of unrequited U.S. initiatives toward the whites and some opposition from the blacks in order to develop an atmosphere conducive to change in white attitudes through persuasion and erosion.”³⁴

In terms of a positive prognosis for option two, the NSSM39 study observed that U.S. strategic, economic, and scientific interests in the region would be protected, and there was a chance that the communication strategy would prompt a lifting of the region’s “siege mentality.” Yet, the study did acknowledge that this option was a gamble, being “. . . extremely long-range and the outcome doubtful at best.” There was a danger that the white states might choose to interpret the U.S. relaxation of policy as a simple “vindication” of their experiment in racial separation. African states, meanwhile, might be highly critical of the U.S. approach, unwilling to back a long-term path of moderate reform.³⁵ Yet, option two’s major strength was that it offered something new. Rather than the bet hedging of the past, this approach did attempt to resolve the issue. At least in theory, the United States would actively seek to bring the parties together, committing resources, thus providing incentives and encouraging accommodation.

The “Implementation” of the NSSM39 Strategy

During September 1970, Assistant Secretary of State David Newsom signaled a shift in U.S. policy. Washington DC now sought closer cooperation with the South African government. Newsom’s address rejected the isolation of Pretoria, favoring instead, “appropriate channels of communication and dialogue.”³⁶ By December this strategy had gained a label: “Communication.” It was suggested that the United States and all the parties in South Africa had no workable alternative to this Communication approach. Nationalists could not win an armed struggle against Pretoria’s military might, while the Republic’s government had to reform apartheid if this country was to prosper in the modern world.³⁷ It was in the interests of all the groups to work constructively together.

Newsom believed that the United States could foster forces that were already operating within the region. “We believe change will come in southern Africa,” he later told the Atlanta Press Club:

Economic and demographic pressures make this inevitable. In South Africa itself there is a lessening of rigidity. Change is a central theme of discussion; there is psychological and intellectual ferment within the Afrikaner community; there have been isolated instances of acceptance of multiracial activities; there is a growing realism amongst businessmen that Africans are important to them as skilled workers and as a market. They are beginning to focus on the need for improvement of working conditions for non-whites. We cannot expect change to come quickly or easily. Our hope is that it will come peacefully.

In this respect, the Nixon administration sought to encourage Pretoria. Newsom told the Press Club, “isolation can breed rigid resistance to change, open doors can accelerate it.” Nixon, as would Ford, thus attempted to build an influence relationship with South Africa, and rejected alternative strategies based on

chastisement. Punitive sanctions were dismissed as “oversimplified solutions” to a highly complex problem.³⁸ U.S. policy was now not about “retaliation, punishment, or clearing our own consciences,” but an attempt to “maintain and increase communication with all the people of South Africa,” in order to promote “peaceful change.”³⁹

In light of these speeches, and subsequent U.S. actions, most scholars addressing the southern Africa policy of the Nixon and Ford administrations infer that President Nixon selected option two when presented with the five potential courses of action recommended by the NSSM39 report.⁴⁰ This is not accurate. It is the case that the subsequent U.S. approach tended to loosely follow the premise of option two. Likewise, several of this strategy’s operational examples were faithfully executed. The U.S. position consequently moved away from option three. Yet, to present the South Africa policy of the United States in the first half of the 1970s as being a methodical, or even close, application of option two would be misleading. One can find components of all five of the NSSM39 options in what followed. Donald B. Easum, Newsom’s successor as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, is thus entirely correct when he stated of the NSSM39 report that none of the “options in the final paper was infact adopted as such.”⁴¹ Only selected elements of option two were implemented, in what amounted to a confused and largely half-hearted policy addressing apartheid.⁴²

Before the chapter moves on to clarify this argument, however, it is first necessary to examine what actually did happen vis-à-vis U.S. relations with South Africa during the NSSM39 era. Policy developments addressing three themes will be examined in turn: human rights issues, strategic concerns, and economic interests.

NSSM39 and Human Rights Interests

One area where the Nixon and Ford administrations did not alter U.S. foreign policy toward South Africa was with respect to the official U.S. position on apartheid. The public rhetoric remained unambiguous. President Nixon, for example, referring to the Republic, expressed his “conviction that the United States cannot be indifferent to racial policies which violate our national ideals and constitute a direct affront to American citizens.”⁴³ His administration’s position was made clear to the U.S. Congress. Frank E. Loy, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Transportation and Telecommunications, for instance, expressed the executive’s “repugnance” over apartheid as early as April 1969.⁴⁴ Washington DC’s harshest rhetoric on this issue, however, was reserved for international consumption at the United Nations. Here, representatives added the phrases “an illegal and obnoxious violation of fundamental human rights,” and simply “odious,” to the official U.S. language used to challenge apartheid.⁴⁵ Confirming this position, the United States supported U.N. resolutions condemning the racial policies of the South African government, as long as these measures avoided reference to any consequent punitive actions.⁴⁶

Nixon and Ford also maintained, and strengthened, the Johnson administration’s position on Namibia. The United States in the 1970s consistently

reaffirmed its support for General Assembly resolution 2145. This measure, passed in 1966, condemned Pretoria's governance of Namibia, revoked the South African mandate over this territory, and required the Republic to remove its administration from Windhoek. Again, Washington DC supported resolutions reiterating these demands, as long as comprehensive punitive action was not inferred.⁴⁷ Charles Yost, Nixon's ambassador at the United Nations, also made clear the disappointment the United States felt over South Africa's introduction to Namibia, "where it has no right to govern," the "discriminatory rule which is its own unhappy trademark."⁴⁸

Both the Nixon and Ford administrations backed this rhetoric with action. The United States, for example, provided financial support to educational programs assisting Namibian refugees, and, in particular, the running of the U.N. Institute for Namibia in Lusaka.⁴⁹ Washington DC also sought to confront Windhoek's oppression of the territory's nationalist opposition. Official U.S. representations were made over the detention, trial, and public floggings of nationalist leaders.⁵⁰

Indeed, Nixon and Ford were prepared to move beyond the actions of previous administrations when it came to Namibia. Increased U.S. legal and economic pressure was applied. In July 1970, for instance, the United States backed the Security Council's request for the International Court of Justice to issue an opinion on the territory's status.⁵¹ The State Department's legal advisor, John L. Stevenson, was dispatched to The Hague, where he delivered testimony countering Pretoria's arguments that the U.N. had exceeded its authority when terminating the Republic's mandate.⁵² At the conclusion of this case, the ICJ deemed the South African presence in Windhoek "illegal," and placed the Republic "under obligation to withdraw its administration," putting "an end to its occupation of the Territory."⁵³ The United States endorsed this opinion.⁵⁴

In terms of any punitive sanctions to be taken over South Africa's intransigence, the Nixon administration's initial position had been to play down this issue. This was to avoid the United States being forced to cast its veto in the Security Council.⁵⁵ However, as a consequence of a more detailed policy review, the U.S. position against South Africa hardened.⁵⁶ National Security Decision Memorandum number 55 (NSDM55), of April 1970, sought to limit U.S. economic activity in Namibia. The U.S. government was now to officially discourage any new investment in this territory. In addition, U.S. Ex-Im Bank facilities were withdrawn for all trade involving Namibia, and Washington DC would no longer intercede on behalf of U.S. companies by way of protection with respect to commercial investments made in this territory after 27 October 1966 (the date of General Assembly resolution 2145).⁵⁷ In light of this policy shift, the United States voted in favor of U.N. Security Council resolution 283 (1970), which called upon all members to terminate similar programs of state assistance.⁵⁸

However, this modification of U.S. policy, from "neither approving, nor disapproving" of investment in Namibia, to a position of official discouragement, did not lead Nixon or Ford to advocate the imposition of mandatory economic sanctions. Both administrations, as it will be seen below, remained categorically opposed to such measures. The administrations believed it was up to individual

companies themselves to decide if they wished to continue to operate in Namibia, or not. The U.S. government consequently repeatedly voted against U.N. resolutions proposing a more comprehensive economic embargo.⁵⁹ Indeed, the United States was eventually forced to use its Security Council veto twice, in 1975 and 1976, to maintain the voluntary nature of the sanctions placed on Namibia.⁶⁰

Instead of punitive measures, the United States advocated negotiations as the way forward. Such negotiations, after all, lay at the heart the Communication strategy. The United States thus considered itself "encouraged" by South African statements proposing constitutional talks with black representatives in Namibia. Despite recognizing that Pretoria's announcements "lacked necessary precision and detail," the Nixon and Ford administrations did consider this initiative to be of genuine value. For the time being, Washington DC was patiently prepared to see where these talks led, although the South African government was warned that ultimately "no significant element of the Namibian people or of Namibian political life should be excluded" from these negotiations.⁶¹

South Africa eventually convened the "Turnhalle" constitutional conference in 1975 (named after the gymnasium in which it was held). Protracted negotiations over two years explored the possibilities of an "internal settlement" between the local white authority and representatives of Namibia's various ethnic groups. However, against the advice of the United States, the territory's most representative political movement, the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), was excluded from this forum.⁶² The chances of the Turnhalle delegates realizing or even seeking something akin to one person, one vote was remote. Yet, the United States was locked into applauding any event that saw black and white southern Africans talking to each other. Washington DC's official line on the Turnhalle initiative was to state of this body that it "cannot be regarded as a definitive exercise of self-determination," but "on the other hand, the constitutional conference at Windhoek was a start."⁶³ It was hoped that, given time, these negotiations would develop, become more inclusive, and bear fruit. An initiative of this sort, U.S. representative William Scranton argued at the U.N., should definitely not be disrupted by the imposition of punitive sanctions.⁶⁴

Nixon and Ford's Communication policy also required that the United States look for signs of reform in South Africa itself. Any signals issued by Pretoria addressing constitutional change were consequently talked-up in Washington DC. In 1974, for instance, U.N. Ambassador John Scali talked of "voices that augur hope of change." Rejecting proposed punitive sanctions in the Security Council, he argued: "My government believes that this all-or-nothing approach would be a major strategic mistake, especially at a time when we have been hearing what may be new voices of conciliation out of South Africa. These new voices should be tested."⁶⁵

U.S. officials were particularly keen, for example, to see if any meaningful change could result from the homelands policy. This, after all, was the only real example of black and white politicians talking to each other within the Republic. During a 1970 trip to South Africa, for example, David Newsom explored the potential of the Bantustan program with South African officials.

When the assistant secretary asked if Pretoria was “really prepared to allow black national groups to advance to complete independence,” he received a positive response.⁶⁶

Visits to the United States by homeland leaders followed. Kaiser Matanzima of the Transkei, for example, was awarded a State Department leadership grant, enabling 1972 talks in Washington DC. Matanzima reportedly found the Nixon administration more open than its predecessors with respect to the legitimacy of his government. Conversations explored the possibility that the homelands could offer genuine political participation for blacks in the region.⁶⁷ U.S. officials were likewise interested in the ideas of, and retained contacts with, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi. The Kwazulu Bantustan leader was granted a personal meeting with President Nixon.⁶⁸

The efforts of the administrations to “maintain and increase communication with all the people of South Africa” also obliged the United States to oppose the campaign to exclude the Republic from the United Nations.⁶⁹ Momentum had built on this issue during the early 1970s. U.S. representatives argued, beyond issues of legality and hypocrisy, that isolation would be counterproductive, as established channels of negotiation and reconciliation would be removed. As John Scali put it, “History holds no example of a pariah state that reformed itself in exile.”⁷⁰ Maintaining this position, the United States was prepared to cast its veto in the Security Council, preventing the expulsion of Pretoria from the U.N. in 1974.⁷¹

In terms of the theme of human rights, then, U.S. policy had changed little under Nixon and Ford. The disapproving rhetoric continued, whilst negotiations were advocated over strategies of isolation. Compared to the Johnson years, relations between Washington DC and Pretoria had warmed, but the South African government’s racial policies still prevented closer ties. For instance, despite the underlying strategy of Communication, the United States felt compelled to take a harsher position on Namibia, discouraging investment in this territory. There was not much room for maneuver when it came to human rights. The strategic field, however, proved more fruitful for Communication. As it is shown below, in order to create positive sanctions, the Nixon and Ford administrations felt more confident in relaxing the U.S. stance in this area.

NSSM39 and Strategic Interests

Since 1963, the arms embargo placed on South Africa had been at the heart of the U.S. response to apartheid. The core provisions of this restriction remained unaltered by the Nixon and Ford administrations. David Newsom told the U.S. Congress in 1973 that Washington DC was rigorously implementing the 1963 measures, emphasizing that the arms embargo was not “a passive act.” Instead, he continued, “it requires constant attention to commerce with the area. It means considerable sacrifice on the part of U.S. exporters who have seen substantial sales in southern Africa go to other countries less contentious about the embargo and less criticized by the Africans.” Newsom, pointing to permitted “after-sales” exceptions included in the original 1963 legislation, noted that the administration

had approved the sale of spare parts for seven South African Air Force planes and two shipments of torpedo equipment for the South African Navy. No other sales of lethal military equipment had been authorized. Nor had the administration had cause to invoke Kennedy's "international security" exemption to the ban, where weaponry could be sold to South Africa if this was deemed important to the broader agenda of the U.S. containment strategy.⁷² Nixon had therefore gone beyond legal obligations when refusing to authorize the sale of naval reconnaissance aircraft to the Republic, despite strong lobbying from Pretoria and the build up of Soviet shipping in the Indian Ocean.⁷³

Despite this full support for the 1963 embargo, both the Nixon and Ford administrations were against extending this measure. Efforts in the United Nations to include spare parts and light aircraft within the list of proscribed items were regarded as too "sweeping" by U.S. representative William B. Buffum.⁷⁴ Likewise, the United States also rejected proposals to change the status of the U.N. ban from a voluntary one to a mandatory measure.⁷⁵

Indeed, running counter to the views of the majority of U.N. members, the United States selectively relaxed its stance on this embargo. In the spirit of Communication, the margins of the ban were manipulated to create a positive sanction. It was thought that such a gesture may convince Pretoria of the benefits of cooperating with Washington DC. As per the recommendations of option two, a more liberal approach was taken to selling dual-purpose civilian/military equipment to the Republic. As early as 1969, the Nixon administration authorized the sale of General Electric jet engines, previously denied by the Johnson administration, permitting Dassault of France to sell its *Mystère 20* aircraft to South Africa.⁷⁶ These planes, with minor modifications, had previously been used for military applications.

Formalizing this positive sanction, and as a remedy to the Johnson administration's somewhat inconsistent approach to processing gray area applications, Henry Kissinger issued, on behalf of the president, National Security Decision Memorandum number 81 (NSDM81) of August 1970. The United States now permitted the sale of gray area items to civilian buyers, at the discretion of the Department of Commerce, even if it were likely that these goods would have a predominantly military end-use. Likewise, NSDM81 also authorized the purchase of dual-use items, with a predominately civilian use, to the South African military, as long as these goods had not been built to military specifications and had "no direct and clear application in combat, or to internal security operations."⁷⁷ This shift in policy was quietly announced by David Newsom, again in his September 1970 Chicago address. After carefully declaring the administration's "fundamental abhorrence of apartheid," the assistant secretary let it be known that the United States would now "consider licenses for limited numbers of small unarmed executive civilian-type aircraft."⁷⁸

The relaxation of strategic relations between the two countries also involved a resumption of meetings between senior South African military personnel and their U.S. counterparts. The United States had previously avoided such contact since the Sharpeville shootings of 1960.⁷⁹ In January 1974, for instance, South African minister of Information Connie Mulder accepted an invitation to talk with then

vice president, Gerald Ford. Ford arranged an additional meeting for Mulder with Admiral Raymond Peet. Peet had recently commanded the U.S. Pacific Fleet, and at the time of the engagement headed the Defense Security Assistance Agency, the Pentagon bureau that handled foreign military sales. Admiral Hugo Biermann, the South African Chief of Staff, was also granted a visa to visit the United States, in a "private capacity," during April 1974. Biermann used this trip to meet, amongst other officials, Admiral Thomas Moorer, chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Acting Secretary of the Navy, William Middendorf.⁸⁰

Strategic links between the United States and South Africa were also maintained via the continued use of the NASA and Department of Defense missile tracking stations located outside Johannesburg. In reality, however, these facilities had become more political trouble than they were worth. Alternative sites were now fully operable, and, as seen above, with Congressman Charles Rangel breathing down NASA's neck, the U.S. began to reduce its reliance on these amenities. One of the NASA stations was vacated in 1973, the U.S. Air Force now only made "intermittent" use of its tracking station. The last NASA mission supported from the remaining facility, the "Viking" Mars landings, was completed in October 1975. In the spirit of Communication, however, when pressed over this withdrawal process, the Nixon administration explained that the extraction decision had been made for technical and not political reasons.⁸¹

More so than space technology, nuclear scientific cooperation proved to be a better bet for the Communication strategy. Despite South Africa not having signed the U.N. Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and Pretoria resisting placing its whole nuclear program under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency's safeguard program, the Nixon and Ford administrations continued the tradition of generous U.S. assistance to South Africa's nuclear program. In 1973, for example, Foxboro was granted an export license to sell South Africa two computers that were destined for use in the Pelindaba enrichment plant.⁸² Likewise, in 1974, the United States agreed to amend its 1957 "Atoms-for-Peace" agreement with South Africa, increasing the permitted amount of U.S. reactor fuel that could be exported to the Republic.⁸³ The U.S. Nuclear Corporation of Oak Ridge was consequently licensed to sell a major quantity, 12.5 kilograms, of highly enriched uranium to the Republic in January 1974, followed by a further consignment of the same weight in October of that year.⁸⁴ Cooperation in the nuclear field, it was hoped, could feed into the general atmosphere of Communication.

Yet, this area too hit difficulties. In 1975, South Africa let it be known that it soon aimed to enrich its own uranium, making any excess fuel available commercially.⁸⁵ This would have broken a 30-year-old U.S.-Canadian-Australian monopoly over this market. Likewise, Pretoria was instrumental in establishing a (raw) uranium cartel as a response to low commodity prices in the first half of the 1970s. U.S. firms were not part of this cartel due to U.S. antitrust legislation.⁸⁶ Reacting to these developments, and as part of a general worldwide tightening of its nuclear relations, the Ford administration suspended the sale of enriched uranium to South Africa in 1975. Explaining this move, Washington

DC cited Pretoria's limited adherence to international safeguard guarantees. In the Republic, this decision was interpreted as Ford seeking to protect U.S. commercial interests.⁸⁷

NSSM39 and Economic Interests

The Nixon and Ford administrations acted in the economic sphere much as they had with the arms embargo. The core of the previous U.S. approach toward South Africa remained intact. In order to foster an atmosphere of Communication, however, changes were made at the margins of these policies.

The United States was not to impose punitive economic sanctions against the Republic during the 1970s. Indeed, Nixon and Ford actively steered away from targeting commercial links. Unlike the case of Namibia, and the new line of officially discouraging investment in this territory, the administrations thought it inappropriate to hinder economic activity within South Africa itself.⁸⁸ This was a position defended in the United Nations. U.S. representatives regularly abstained with regard to, or voted against, resolutions proposing economic sanctions.⁸⁹ A now familiar list of arguments was aired in support of this stance. Officials maintained that the demanded embargo was "nearly impossible" to implement; that sanctions would "harden the resolve of the South African Government"; that it would be difficult to repatriate any divested capital; that the Republic's economy was too robust to be affected; that these measures were "not desired by the vast majority of nonwhites in South Africa"; and that the United States traditionally only limited its economic relations on the grounds of "security interests," and not simply because "we approve or disapprove" of a government.⁹⁰

Officially, throughout the 1970s, the United States continued to "neither encourage nor discourage investment in the Republic of South Africa."⁹¹ Thus despite, in the State Department's assessment, a "generally favorable climate for investment," which was "particularly attractive" to U.S. corporations, Washington DC refrained from organizing promotional campaigns directed at the Republic or participating in trade fairs within South Africa.⁹² The United States also published and distributed materials aimed at U.S. businesses outlining the potential problems associated with investing in the apartheid economy.⁹³ Washington DC actively portrayed itself as being neutral on the issue of commercial ties with the Republic.

However, rather than maintaining this neutrality, in reality, the Nixon and Ford administrations were more interested in persuading U.S. firms to exercise corporate responsibility within this market. As a 1971 State Department pamphlet put it, "the best way to defend our economic interest in South Africa against attack is to act toward non-whites there as nearly as possible as one would act in the United States."⁹⁴ Squaring this priority with official policy, U.S. spokespersons began to add a rider to the original mantra. Statements still emphasized that the United States "neither encourages, nor discourages, investment in South Africa," but now an extra sentence would be added: "Where investment occurs, we seek to encourage enlightened employment practices by American firms."⁹⁵

A number of larger U.S. companies, General Motors, Chrysler, and American Metal Climax, had followed Polaroid's lead in the early 1970s, and established social responsibility programs with respect to their dealings in South Africa.⁹⁶ The Nixon administration sought to reinforce this trend. The president's 1973 foreign policy report to Congress is a case in point. Highlighting the emerging programs of good employment practice, Nixon considered it "particularly gratifying that some American companies have taken the lead in encouraging this. They recognized that they were in a unique position to upgrade conditions and opportunities for all their employees regardless of race, to the fullest extent possible under South African laws."⁹⁷ The State Department, likewise, sent a pamphlet entitled "Employment Practices of U.S. Firms in South Africa" to all corporations active in this market during 1973, and followed this up with a 1974 statement that "called upon" these businesses to make available to South African workers and families the "means" to secure "decent and productive lives."⁹⁸ The United States even went as far as to encourage U.S. firms to interact with the Republic's emerging black trade unions, including unregistered organizations. Assistant Secretary of State Donald Easum advocated "discussions and negotiations" with all "legitimate representatives of black workers."⁹⁹

Another policy development that challenged the notion of Washington DC neither encouraging nor discouraging South African investment was the Nixon administration's decision in 1970 to broaden its support for U.S. corporations in this market via the U.S. Export-Import Bank. President Johnson had previously restricted public loans and guarantees available for South African transactions from this source.¹⁰⁰ The Nixon administration estimated that these restrictions had cost U.S. businesses, since 1964, somewhere between US\$25 million and US\$100 million per annum.¹⁰¹ As a consequence, and in order to promote Communication, the Ex-Im Bank once again began to offer insurance and guarantees, but no credits, to U.S. firms dealing with South Africa. The Bank would entertain applications up to a limit of US\$200 million per transaction, and the term of this assistance was increased from Johnson's barrier of five years to a maximum period of ten years.¹⁰² Having reviewed this position in 1976, the Ford administration likewise chose to keep these facilities open to U.S. business.¹⁰³

This relaxation of U.S. policy provided a windfall for U.S. firms investing in South Africa. Ex-Im Bank assistance increased eight-fold between 1971 and 1976 (see table 5.1). Indeed, U.S. corporations operating in this market performed well during the Nixon and Ford period. Between 1970 and 1975, U.S. exports to the Republic were to increase by 240 percent; imports from South Africa were to almost triple; while American direct investment in the Republic's economy rose from US\$868 million to US\$1,582 million during these five years.¹⁰⁴ U.S. private bank loans to the South African public sector also increased during the first half of the 1970s. Citicorp led the field, lending US\$150 million to ISCOR, the Republic's steel and iron parastatal during 1974-1975. This bank was also to lend ESCOM, the state electricity-generating corporation, US\$30 million at this time.¹⁰⁵ Such loans to both the public and private sectors left American banks accounting for 20 percent of South Africa's total foreign liabilities by

Table 5.1 U.S. Export-Import Bank exposure in South Africa (US\$ millions), June 1971–June 1976

	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Short term	4,434	6,978	11,204	22,772	25,525	59,606
Medium term	10,609	13,136	21,054	19,674	15,870	25,952
Long term	18,770	40,858	53,919	66,977	138,464	174,034
Total	33,813	60,972	86,177	109,423	179,859	259,682

Source: U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. Committee on International Relations. Subcommittee on International Resources, Food, and Energy. *Resource development in South Africa and U.S. policy: hearings...* [94th Congress, 2nd Session: May and June 1976]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1976. 254.

the end of 1975.¹⁰⁶ It seemed U.S. business needed neither encouragement nor discouragement to turn a profit in the South African economy.

The Failure of the NSSM39 Strategy

Ultimately, Nixon and Ford's Communication approach contributed little positive to the situation in South Africa. There is scant evidence of Pretoria modifying its behavior, or political groups being more willing to talk to one another, as a result of this strategy. It was always recognized by option two's authors that their method involved risk, yet this policy was never given a chance to bloom.¹⁰⁷ Communication was starved of the leadership it required, was only partially implemented, and, ironically, was not properly communicated to its target audience.

In terms of leadership, South Africa was never going to be a priority within the higher reaches of the Nixon and Ford executives. Détente with the Soviet Union, rapprochement with China, negotiations over Vietnam, and mediation in the Middle East monopolized the attention of the West Wing as did managing the fall out from Watergate. Southern Africa was very much a peripheral concern. Indeed, in March 1970, President Nixon explicitly requested that he not be sent papers relating to Sub-Saharan Africa, unless they specifically required a presidential decision. He wished to concentrate instead on the "big battles" of the Cold War, and instructed Kissinger to make similar arrangements.¹⁰⁸

This lack of management from above was always going to hamper the implementation of Communication. There was, after all, little consensus over this policy within lower ranks of the bureaucracy. Many in the State Department, for instance, especially the Africa and International Organizations bureaux, had favored option three over the "selected" option two. The NSSM39 study had been completed eight months late because of these serious internal differences. Dissent remained.¹⁰⁹ Kissinger realized that he faced opposition from elements of the State Department with respect to his chosen path—the "Kennedy-liberals" as he described them. Yet, neither as national security advisor nor as secretary of state did Kissinger allocate time to make sure all within the bureaucracy were implementing official policy.¹¹⁰ The component parts of the U.S. foreign policy machine were not pulling together when it came to South Africa during the first half of the 1970s.

Kissinger's only real intervention during this period came in 1975. He sacked Donald Easum, his Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. Easum had told African leaders that there might be circumstances under which the United States would support the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations, and he had gone on record stating that senior South African military officials would not be granted visas to visit the United States.¹¹¹ By these actions, the assistant secretary had veered too far away from Communication's goals, and was removed from post. There were, however, few other examples of leadership such as this. For the most part, instances of policy slippage went unpunished. Consequently, the era of NSSM39 was characterized by the United States sending mixed messages to Pretoria.

Indeed, the policy of Communication was never really explained to any of its "stakeholders." In terms of the South African government, for instance, there is no evidence to suggest that Pretoria was comprehensively briefed over U.S. intentions and expectations or the rewards that may follow. The Republic's officials were left to interpret snippets of speeches, such as Newsom's 1970 mention of light aircraft sales, and wonder what exactly the new U.S. approach would bring. This lack of transparency seems remarkable given that Communication, in scholar Christopher Coker's words, "was entirely contingent on the intentions and actions of the second party."¹¹²

This opaqueness also created confusion back in the United States. Key policy modifications, rather than being publicized and presented as such, were often kept secret. NSDM38 relating to the arms embargo, NSDM55 on Namibia and NSDM81 easing Ex-Im Bank restrictions all contained clauses directing that the contents of these documents should be held in the strictest confidence.¹¹³ Kissinger's obsession with secrecy and both administrations' distrust of their bureaucracies resulted in no clear explanation of policy emerging from the West Wing. In 1971, for instance, Marshall Wright of the NSC staff wrote to Kissinger concerning the NSDM81 Ex-Im Bank decision made 14 months earlier. The president had desired that this change be made quietly. Yet the secrecy surrounding this policy shift was so great, Wright reported that "In fact, the bureaucracy was never informed of this decision."¹¹⁴ Given that even officials within the executive, the very individuals charged with implementing policy, were unsure over what Communication demanded, it is hardly surprising that Pretoria expressed confusion over what Nixon and Ford required of them.¹¹⁵

Congress was also in the dark. Charles Diggs, in October 1971, wrote to Secretary of State William Rogers stating, "it is totally unacceptable that the U.S. Government takes refuge in allegations of general 'continuing efforts' with the South African Government. I would appreciate more specificity on our communications with the South African Government."¹¹⁶ This lack of information left the administrations open to attack. Antiapartheid campaigners offered their own interpretations of what Nixon and Ford were trying to achieve. Most emphasized a "tilt" in favor of the minority rule regimes, suggesting that the United States was supporting the status quo in southern Africa.¹¹⁷ The executive responded to these criticisms with bland denials, but failed to provide any specifics over precisely what it was attempting to do. The positive

sanctions strategy was never defended in detail. It is not surprising, therefore, that when the State Department came to review the NSSM39 strategy in 1975, a key suggestion was that the United States should “enunciate more frequently and more precisely what our Southern African policies are, so that white South Africans, black Africans and domestic interest groups will know what we are prepared to do and what we are not prepared to do.”¹¹⁸ By this date, however, time had run out on Communication.

Rather than secrecy and vague pronouncements, any program of positive sanctions needs a precise agenda. What exactly did the United States want in return for modifying the arms embargo, Ex-Im Bank facilities, and providing diplomatic protection? If there was indeed an atmosphere of reform within the Republic, how could the United States encourage Pretoria to make use of this opportunity? Did Washington DC think labor reform (given the rise of black trade unions) could ease the racial conflict in South Africa? Or would relaxing petty apartheid or using the homelands as a conduit of representation be key stepping-stones to further changes? What, exactly? Nixon's and Ford's positive sanctions had no accompanying demand for any quid pro quo. In Coker's assessment, “The administration's objectives, although fixed, were not defined. It was one matter to insist that final decisions must be the responsibility of local actors, quite another to expect that sanctions could be post-dated on a blank check left for South Africa to complete. . . . Nothing was to be gained by offering concessions so indiscriminately that Pretoria had no idea of what was being asked of it.”¹¹⁹

Two areas where U.S. concessions may have impressed upon Pretoria the benefits of cooperation were the arms embargo and power generation. Yet, the South African government's requirements in these fields were not targeted. In terms of the arms embargo, for example, National Security Decision Memorandum number 38 of January 1970 dictated that U.S. naval vessels should continue to avoid using the Republic's ports.¹²⁰ This issue had become symbolic to South African officials.¹²¹ A relaxation of policy here would have registered in the Republic as a genuine positive sanction, but Nixon and Ford decided to pass over this particular operation example recommended by option two. This decision is all the more curious since even the Johnson administration, by the end of its term, was close to lifting this restriction.¹²²

Similarly, Washington DC did not engage the South African government in the field of power generation. The Republic, especially given the OPEC crisis of 1973, was sensitive to its vulnerability as an oil importer. It had consequently invested heavily in alternative fuel sources. In 1976, for example, Pretoria was seeking to buy a coal gasification plant from the United States. The Ford administration, however, rejected an Ex-Im Bank loan application from the FLUOR Corporation to supply this facility. Given that the end-user was a South African government parastatal, loan restrictions applied. Considerable lobbying from U.S. business interests and members of Congress failed to get this decision overturned.¹²³ A letter addressed to President Ford from 16 conservative U.S. senators suggested if the FLUOR application were denied support, this would “tend to limit our influence in southern Africa. We would strongly urge . . . a re-examination

of American policy toward South Africa so that the United States might play a constructive role.”¹²⁴ The Ex-Im Bank restriction, however, remained in place.

A similar scenario played itself out in the area of nuclear power generation. During 1976, General Electric applied for Ex-Im Bank credits for the sale and delivery to the Republic of a nuclear reactor. Although the U.S. Nuclear Regulation Commission (NRC) had initially approved an export license, and there was talk of this transaction being a positive sanction, giving the U.S. government's future leverage over the development of South Africa's nuclear program, the deal fell through. Debate centered upon Pretoria's offer to agree to ad hoc safety guarantees, but refusal to sign the U.N. Non-Proliferation treaty. Eventually, delay over the White House ratification of the NRC decision meant Pretoria looked elsewhere for its reactor, and General Electric lost the contract.¹²⁵ Again, a minor alteration in U.S. policy could have sent a clear message to South Africa about the potential of cooperation with the United States. Option two of the NSSM39 study had recommended the resumption of full Ex-Im Bank facilities in its operation examples. In both the FLUOR and General Electric cases restrictions remained in place. The Ford administration was unwilling to pay a higher political price to buy genuine influence.

Instead of addressing the area of power generation, Ex-Im Bank regulations were eased with respect to the sale of gray area light aircraft to the Republic. As Communication's core positive sanction, this concession was remarkably ineffective. The Republic apparently had no special demand for these items. The sale of U.S. aircraft to South Africa actually fell after the issuing of NSDM81 (see table 5.2).¹²⁶ No particular thought seemed to have gone into the two administrations' choice of positive sanctions.

Communication, then, had failed. Few Africans were surprised. Seretse Khama, president of Botswana, had warned Washington DC as early as 1971 that it was operating a dangerous policy toward South Africa. “Unless a positive overall strategy is developed,” he predicted, “communication will slip into acceptance and moral pressure will be reduced to mere rhetoric.”¹²⁷ This indeed describes the position reached by early 1976. Roger Morris, the chief architect of the NSSM39 study, wrote of this policy in his memoirs: “In retrospect, it

Table 5.2 U.S. aircraft exports to South Africa, 1967–1972

	<i>Year</i>	<i>Number</i>
Johnson Administration	1967	333
	1968	300
Nixon Administration	1969	284
	1970	180
	1971	135
	1972	144

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of Census. FT-410 export statistics. Cited in U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Africa. *Implementation of the U.S. arms embargo: hearings...* [93 Congress, 1st session: March and April 1973]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1973. 47.

was a disaster, naive in concept, practically impossible for the government to execute, and thus a ready cover for pursuing the most reactionary and short sighted U.S. interests in the region." Morris complained that the subtleties of the policy were ignored. The State Department's Africa Bureau was reluctant to support positive sanctions, more conservative executive agencies concentrated only on cooperating with the minority rule regimes, whilst more senior officials took no interest at all. Consequently, "Cloaked in new rhetoric and rationale, the Pentagon, Commerce, NASA, CIA, and myriad private interests continued business as usual in southern Africa while the racial confrontation quietly festered."¹²⁸ By 1975, even President Mobutu of Zaire, a normally staunch ally of Nixon and Ford, was complaining that Communication policy was one of "status quo and fait accompli."¹²⁹

The Kissinger Initiative

"We support self-determination, majority rule, equal rights, and human dignity for all the peoples of southern Africa—in the name of moral principle, international law and world peace." This was the message of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's 1976 Lusaka Address. For the first time in the history of the relations between the United States and South Africa, high-ranking officials within Washington DC's foreign policymaking hierarchy were now directing sustained attention to the situation in southern Africa. Recognizing this, Kissinger appealed, "there is nothing to gain in a debate about whether in the past America has neglected Africa or been insufficiently committed to African goals. The U.S. has many responsibilities in the world. Given the burden it has carried in the postwar world, it could not do everything simultaneously." "No good can come of mutual recrimination," Kissinger suggested, "my journey is intended to give fresh impetus to our cooperation and to usher in a new era in American policy"¹³⁰

But what had brought this busy secretary of state to the capital of Zambia? Why was Kissinger forced to launch a U.S. initiative in the region? Events in Angola during 1975 and 1976 provide answers to these questions.

The overthrow of the Caetano regime in Lisbon, and Portugal's subsequent decision to withdraw from its colonies during 1975, took Washington DC by surprise. Its southern Africa policy lay shattered. The key premise of option two, that the "whites are here to stay," was proved wrong. In Angola, the previous U.S. strategy of providing small levels of support to both the Portuguese colonists and the Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (FNLA) liberation movement, via NATO and the CIA respectively, provided no kind of policy foundation for the circumstances now present in this country.¹³¹ As a result, when the Alvor agreement, a treaty of power sharing between the three competing Angolan liberation movements, broke down before elections could be held, Washington DC responded in a Cold War mindset. The Ford administration backed the FNLA, and later the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA), with money and arms against the rival Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA). This decision was taken on the basis that the MPLA had received

support from the Soviet Union in the past. In reality, ideologically speaking, these nationalist groups were all fairly similar in outlook.¹³²

Easum's successor, Assistant Secretary of State Nathaniel Davis, favored intervention by the U.N. or the Organization of African Unity, to try and patch up with the Alvor agreement.¹³³ Kissinger, however, ignored this counsel and plunged the United States into a covert proxy war it had little chance of winning. Moscow and Cuba played a game of escalation well, backing the MPLA to victory. Cuban ground troops were eventually committed to fend off an anti-MPLA coalition consisting of UNITA forces, the FNLA, Zairian armored units, a substantial South Africa Defense Force column, and CIA funded mercenaries.¹³⁴ The collusion, even if incidental, between the CIA and the South African military did not go unnoticed amongst African states.¹³⁵ The U.S. Congress, wary of another Vietnam scenario, eventually put an end to the U.S. involvement in this conflict, starving the CIA of funds, and thus forcing an end to Ford's covert war in Angola.¹³⁶

The secretary of state was left in defeat with Assistant Secretary Davis' resignation, an angry Congress, the embarrassment of a *de facto* military alliance with South Africa, little credibility in black Africa, and, counter to a central U.S. objective aimed at containing communism, twenty thousand Cuban combat troops camped in Angola protecting the MPLA's victory. Angola had been lost, negotiations in both Namibia and Rhodesia had stalled, and the OAU states had committed themselves to an armed struggle.¹³⁷ The danger, as Washington DC now saw it, was an increased chance of foreign intervention spreading elsewhere in the region.¹³⁸ Kissinger was forced to act. The status quo of NSSM39 was truly broken.

The Kissinger initiative was to concentrate on Rhodesia, as it was here that Kissinger thought the radicalization of the decolonization process posed the greatest threat to regional stability.¹³⁹ The secretary of state's tactic, in his own words, was

to co-opt the program of moderate evolutionary reform, that is to say majority rule, and minority rights. At the same time we sought to create a sort of firebreak between those whose radicalism was ideological and those whose radicalism was geared to specific issues. We could meet the demands for majority rule; we never thought we could co-opt the ideological radicals; our goal was to isolate them.¹⁴⁰

Significantly, in terms of bilateral relations between South Africa and the United States, Kissinger's "firebreak" strategy relied on Pretoria delivering the Rhodesian government to the negotiating table. Washington DC had always recognized the Republic's hegemony within southern Africa; now Kissinger proposed to tap this power. As the secretary of state told the U.S. Congress, the question he wanted to explore with Prime Minister Vorster was whether South Africa was prepared "to separate its own future from that of Rhodesia and Namibia."¹⁴¹

Kissinger found the Vorster government responsive to his requests.¹⁴² Prime Minister Ian Smith had broadcast to his nation in early 1976: "Regrettably, we can anticipate that the Western powers, blind to the consequences of their action,

will not only acquiesce but will join in the chorus orchestrated by the Russian baton."¹⁴³ Smith failed, however, to anticipate the degree to which the Republic of South Africa would be part of this chorus. "When it comes to the crunch," stated Pretoria's Secretary of Information, "South Africans regard Rhodesians as just as much foreigners as the Dutch or Belgians."¹⁴⁴ The South African government withdrew the security assistance it had previously afforded Salisbury, and started to exert gentle economic pressure on its neighbor. Growing guerrilla successes within Rhodesia, added to the consequences of a decade of U.N. economic sanctions, combined with this South African intervention to force Ian Smith's regime to the negotiating table.¹⁴⁵

It has been suggested that the Ford administration put considerable pressure on Vorster to deliver Smith. It is posited by R.W. Johnson, for example, that Kissinger successfully manipulated the price of gold in order to persuade South Africa to end its protection of Rhodesia.¹⁴⁶ Likewise, there is evidence of U.S. positive sanctions directed toward Pretoria at this time: the sale of US\$1 million worth of aircraft engines, for instance, and vague hints that the United States might still recognize the Transkei.¹⁴⁷ However, in the final analysis, it is more likely that Pretoria, by itself, came to the conclusion that cooperation with this initiative would be in its best interests. This would tally with Kissinger's public and private comment. The secretary of state, in a September 1976 NBC television interview, explained: "We promised nothing to South Africa. . . . We did not have to bring any additional pressure other than an analysis of the facts."¹⁴⁸ Earlier, in the Oval Office, Kissinger had briefed President Ford on Pretoria's reaction to the initiative. He had stated, "As a matter of fact, if anything, they are too eager."¹⁴⁹

The secretary of state's Lusaka address points to why the Republic's government was so willing to go along with the U.S. initiative. Kissinger's speech repeated Washington DC's now standard statement that the "United States will continue to encourage and work for peaceful change . . . based upon the premise that within a reasonable time we shall see a clear evolution toward equality of opportunity and basic human rights for all South Africans." The key sentence, however, read: "in the immediate future, the Republic of South Africa can show its dedication to Africa—and its potential contribution to Africa—by using its influence in Salisbury to promote a rapid negotiated settlement for majority rule in Rhodesia."¹⁵⁰ Kissinger had given notice that Washington DC would give South Africa more time to address apartheid as long as it cooperated with the United States elsewhere in the region.

When pressed, the secretary of state clarified this point both publicly and privately. Before the U.S. media he argued South Africa was "not a colonial entity," but a "legitimate government that carries out practices with which we disagree." It therefore followed that apartheid was a "different phenomenon" from the type of minority rule practiced in Namibia and Rhodesia. Consequently, "conditions in South Africa are more complicated and require a much longer time span for their evolution." Kissinger was careful to emphasize that he believed "majority rule must also come to South Africa," but he suggested that this could be achieved at a slower pace and in "a different way"

than what the U.S. now sought in Namibia and Rhodesia.” It was a return to the familiar theme of “divide and liberate” running throughout postwar U.S. southern Africa policy. Resources would be directed at the decolonisation of South Africa’s neighbors, as a preference to confronting apartheid head on.¹⁵¹ Reinforcing this position, Kissinger privately told South African officials: “To me South Africa is very different so long as at least as I am here.”¹⁵²

Prime Minister Vorster was persuaded to make the break with Salisbury. He realized that defeat in Angola had left South Africa in a precarious military position. The Soweto riots had likewise taken a serious toll on the Republic’s remaining international standing. The policing of these uprisings had outraged the West. Washington DC had joined the rest of the U.N. in “strongly” condemning “the South African Government for its resort to massive violence.”¹⁵³ Under these circumstances, Pretoria calculated that comprehensive punitive economic sanctions might not be too far away. The Republic therefore saw the Kissinger initiative as a way of diverting attention from its domestic troubles, and a chance of regaining favor with the international community. What better way to do this than by partaking in international diplomacy with Dr. Kissinger himself? Vorster successfully delivered Smith to the negotiating table.

Kissinger’s diplomatic breakthrough, however, was only conceptual in nature. It was achieved by ignoring the complexities of the situation, and built on what one British diplomat described as “constructive ambiguity.”¹⁵⁴ The initiative sought one person, one vote, but guaranteed a future pro-Western government through a constitution that still allowed the white majority to dominate the political and military institutions of Zimbabwe. This was clearly not the kind of democracy the nationalist guerrillas had been fighting for. A Geneva conference convened to finalize details was doomed to failure from the outset. Kissinger had successfully persuaded the parties to negotiate, but he had no way of genuinely bridging the different expectations of all the parties involved. What seemed a promising negotiating framework soon disintegrated when subject to closer scrutiny. Three more years of a bitter civil war were required to bring about the Lancaster House talks, and Zimbabwe’s independence.

The NSSM39 review had resulted in positive sanctions being used systematically for the first time as part of the U.S. response to apartheid. The Nixon and Ford administrations considered the development of an influence relationship could net better results than the previous approaches of incremental confrontation. As the United States was not, at this stage, prepared to impose comprehensive punitive economic sanctions, Communication was seen as the way forward. Yet, prior to the Angolan debacle, neither Nixon nor Ford had invested sufficiently in this alternative strategy. Option two was never fully implemented. A combination of inattention and an unwillingness to tamper too much with symbolic human rights stands (the ban on naval visits, for example) ensured that the Communication strategy remained untested. U.S. policy therefore slipped into merely supporting the status quo in southern Africa.

Civil war in Angola, however, did force Kissinger to pay more attention to the region. Although the secretary of state’s initiative ultimately failed, it had,

for eight months, focused the attention of the U.S. foreign policymaking elite on the realities of the region. What is more, for the first time at more senior levels, Washington DC had engaged the government in Pretoria. As demonstrated in the next chapter, this increased U.S. commitment to the region would continue under the presidency of Jimmy Carter. Positive sanctions, however, would be shelved. Instead, human rights were now to be placed at the core of U.S. relations with South Africa.

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CHAPTER 6

“ANDY YOUNG IS NOT A POLICY”:

THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, 1977–1981

Of all the administrations studied in this book, it was President Jimmy Carter’s executive that confronted Pretoria to the greatest extent. Following the 1976 Kissinger initiative, the new White House remained focused on southern Africa at the highest level. Resources were committed and interest sustained. The United States verbally castigated apartheid, issued warnings, undertook symbolic actions, and supported a mandatory U.N. arms embargo. Yet, as it will be seen below, the results of this South Africa policy never matched its ambition. Any net progress gained toward eradicating apartheid fell far short of Washington DC’s objectives. Pretoria refused to heed calls for more rapid change.

The result was stalemate. South African diplomats skillfully circumvented Washington DC’s rhetoric and ultimatums, while the Carter administration itself was unwilling to escalate the level of confrontation. Significant punitive economic sanctions were not deployed. U.S. officials therefore had to content themselves with progress made elsewhere in the region. Negotiations over Namibia’s future had been advanced and Zimbabwe gained its independence in 1980. The eradication of apartheid itself, however, remained beyond U.S. influence during Carter’s watch.

In order to analyze the Carter administration’s more confrontational South Africa strategy, and explain how the diplomatic stalemate emerged, this chapter is divided into five sections. First, the backdrop to this policy is explored, noting the Republic’s combination of reform and repression in the wake of the Soweto uprisings, along with the domestic U.S. reaction to these events. In particular, this section highlights the interest the U.S. Congress was now taking with respect to South Africa. Section two identifies the Carter administration’s overall approach toward apartheid. Why, for example, did the administration deliver an ultimatum to Prime Minister Vorster in May 1977? Following this overview, the next three sections concentrate on the details of the Carter policy. How did relations change, respectively, in the fields of human rights, strategic cooperation, and economic interaction? A conclusion will then be drawn accounting for the diplomatic stalemate and assessing why further progress could not be made.

Taken together, these five sections illustrate a foreign policy strong on ideals and initial focus, but lacking nuances or leverage to realize objectives. Nor was there a robustness, enabling the chosen strategy to last the course.

Repression, Reform, and a Growing Antiapartheid Lobby at Home

The Soweto uprising of 1976 had permanently changed the nature of South African politics. The statistics associated with this violence—approximately 600 fatalities, 4,000 injuries, and 6,000 arrests—clearly demonstrated that many black South Africans were prepared to actively oppose white minority rule.¹ Put into the context of recent nationalist successes in Angola and Mozambique, together with ongoing insurgent wars in Rhodesia and Namibia, few analysts were still prepared to predict that the “whites were here to stay.” With the racial conflict apparently reaching an endgame in southern Africa, the region demanded continued attention from the Carter administration.

As the unrest within South Africa itself continued into 1977, it was evident that Pretoria was committed to protecting white minority rule through repression. The nadir of this security operation, in the eyes of the international community, came in the fall of that year. Fearful of the black consciousness movement, Pretoria cracked down on these groups decisively. Steve Biko was to die in police custody during September, while on 19 October 1977, 18 antiapartheid groups were proscribed, the *World* and *Weekend World* newspapers were closed down, 47 black leaders were detained, and several other individuals banned. The *Washington Post*, noting that moderate whites such as Beyers Naudé and Donald Woods were amongst those banned, observed that even people with “Western middle-class values” advocating “change through peaceful means” were now targets for the South African state.²

Western perceptions of minority rule were never to recover from the Soweto uprising and its aftermath. Pretoria was to suggest radical reforms to apartheid toward the end of the Carter years. The government would act upon the far-reaching recommendations of both the Riekert and Wiehahn Commissions.³ Instances of petty apartheid were reduced, blacks resident in urban (white) areas were to be given basic rights, and the employment color bar was relaxed. In 1979, before Parliament, the new South African prime minister P.W. Botha even talked of the need for white South Africa “to adapt or die.”⁴ But the damage had been done. Small to medium concessions on apartheid that once would have impressed observers in the West now failed to resonate. Pretoria’s continued insistence on its homelands program, with Bophuthatswana becoming “independent” in 1977 and Venda in 1979, demonstrated to the world that the Nationalist Party government, as much as it talked of reform, was still intent on a future where racial discrimination would lie at the core of South African society.

Responding to these events, greater numbers of U.S. legislators began to take the view that the United States should “do something” about apartheid. The U.S. Congress, for example, increased the tempo of its occasional hearings and speculative bills of the earlier 1970s and embarked on a more comprehensive

program of action. The executive was now quizzed on all aspects of its relations with South Africa. Specific hearings were held, for instance, on the U.S. visa policy toward this country, the activities of the Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank, the efficiency of the arms embargo, nuclear cooperation, and the position of the White House on private investment in South Africa.⁵ Bills were introduced to compliment these hearings. In particular, the U.S. "double taxation" treaty with Pretoria was targeted, alongside Ex-Im Bank benefits to American investors.⁶ Various limits on this kind of economic activity were proposed, right through to a complete ban on new U.S. investment in the Republic.⁷ The majority of these bills failed to be enacted, but the 1978 Evans Amendment did succeed, and, as a result, U.S. businesses now had to demonstrate that they operated "fair employment" practices in South Africa should they wish to apply for any Ex-Im Bank support.⁸ Although the Carter administration only experienced the beginnings of congressional activism on apartheid, the legislature-executive showdown on this issue being due later, in the mid-1980s, officials still had to be aware of the galvanizing of opinion on Capitol Hill.

Forces were also mobilizing outside Congress. The interest group, TransAfrica, emerged from a September 1976 Black Leadership Conference on Southern Africa, and was incorporated in 1977.⁹ A year later, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People increased its involvement in the apartheid debate by officially endorsing punitive economic sanctions.¹⁰ Elsewhere, in terms of practical initiatives, the American Committee on Africa joined forces with the Interfaith Centre on Corporate Responsibility to organize a program against banks lending to the Republic, while the divestment campaign began to net results in terms of pressure being placed on U.S. companies to withdraw from the South African market. Polaroid became the first U.S. corporation to do just this, abandoning the Republic in November 1977.¹¹ This developing divestment campaign also saw the number of apartheid-related shareholder resolutions, tabled at the annual general meetings of U.S. public companies, double between 1976 and 1978.¹² Similarly, the targeting of university investment funds began to pay off. A wave of campus demonstrations, with one thousand student protestors being arrested in the spring of 1977 alone, helped persuade 20 universities to divest their finances of stock associated with South Africa.¹³ Although the U.S. antiapartheid movement was still in its infancy, at least in terms of results, this pressure did help develop a broader domestic U.S. perception that something had to be done about South Africa.

Carter's South African Strategy

Although it strongly disagreed with the tactics employed by the U.S. antiapartheid movement, the Carter administration concurred that the time had come for the United States to confront Pretoria. The new administration benefited from a number of individuals within the higher echelons of the State Department with prior knowledge and interest in South Africa. Anthony Lake, director of Policy Planning, for example, had written his PhD thesis addressing U.S. foreign policy toward the region, whilst Donald McHenry, deputy representative to the

U.N., had published a book on U.S. corporations in the Republic.¹⁴ There was a renewed commitment to Africa from the Carter administration. The chief executive himself, was to be the first U.S. president to make an official visit to an independent African state when he traveled to Nigeria in the spring of 1978.¹⁵ He followed this trip by declaring, in June of that year, "we want to see a continent that is free of the dominance of outside powers, free of the bitterness of racial injustice, free of conflict, and free of the burdens of poverty and hunger and disease. We are convinced that the best way to work toward these objectives is through affirmative policies that recognize African realities and that recognize aspirations."¹⁶

One of Carter's first acts had been to direct his vice president, Walter Mondale, to concentrate on African issues.¹⁷ Likewise, the president's choice of ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young, proved to be significant. In Young, there was now a direct link between the administration and the United States' own struggle against racial discrimination. Young's past experience in the civil rights movement, his association with Martin Luther King, and his easy-going style of diplomacy did much to improve relations between Washington DC and African governments.¹⁸ Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, too, paid substantial attention to the issues of southern Africa.¹⁹ Whatever criticisms arose over Carter's approach toward this part of the world, the administration could not be accused, benignly or otherwise, of neglecting southern Africa. Indeed, if Carter's initial foreign policy review process can be used as a measure, southern Africa was rated by the new administration as its fourth most pressing global concern, and it was the first region to be subject to a formal presidential directive.²⁰

Presidential Directives set the tone for the new U.S. policy toward apartheid. Overall, the aim was to "promote the progressive transformation of South African society," and two parallel strategies were to be explored. First, the president directed Vance, in consultation with Young, to draw up a paper recommending "specific steps" that the United States should employ against the Republic. He asked that this paper also comment on the order of implementation of these actions. The second policy path involved Michael Blumenthal, Secretary for the Treasury, developing links with the 12 U.S. corporations that had recently signed the Sullivan Principles on fair employment practices for South Africa (discussed below). Blumenthal was directed to encourage an expansion of this program.²¹

This early presidential directive suggested that the Carter administration was preparing to abandon the "carrots" associated with NSSM39, in favor of "sticks": punitive sanctions included. Confrontation, beyond just rhetoric, was now on the agenda. The administration was not, however, contemplating a complete break with Pretoria. Any punitive measures implemented would be designed to be consummate with events in the Republic, and the South African government's responsiveness to the administration. An effective "ratcheting up" of pressure was the aim.

The second element of the directive underlined this point of measured confrontation. Carter indicated that he was reluctant to impose any kind of economic embargo on the Republic. For the time being, the administration considered that an engaged U.S. corporate community in South Africa could

act as a force for change. Officials would seek to tap into this potential influence by working with the Sullivan signatories. Overall, it was hoped this binary approach would "offer a credible alternative to armed struggle," and limit the opportunities for Soviet intervention in southern Africa.²²

To communicate its new policy to the government in Pretoria, the administration agreed to a summit. Prime Minister B.J. Vorster had suggested the need for such a meeting in a personal letter sent to Carter during March 1977. Vorster had asked, "Why must we confront one another, why must we quarrel with each other? Is there no way in which we can sort out our differences?" He recommended that further talks should take place through a personal envoy, as he considered "normal channels of communication" to be "inappropriate."²³ President Carter, despite Vorster's swipe at the State Department, concurred. He thought that it "could be mutually profitable to have a full and candid exchange of views concerning Southern Rhodesia, Namibia, and the future political evolution of South Africa."²⁴ A bilateral summit was accordingly arranged.

The protocol behind this meeting was intricate. The United States did not wish to be seen talking to South Africa under the full gaze of the international press unless there was to be a guaranteed degree of cooperation. Diplomatic feelers were therefore deployed to help Washington DC determine the rank of the envoy selected and the venue for this summit. In the end, Vice President Mondale was dispatched. The president felt confident enough with Pretoria's continued engagement vis-à-vis the Rhodesian and Namibian negotiations to permit this. Communication prior to the meeting, however, indicated that South Africa was unlikely to offer any significant concessions over apartheid itself. Consequently, South African territory was considered inappropriate for the talks.²⁵ A neutral venue in Vienna was agreed instead, with representatives meeting over two days, commencing on 19 May 1977.

The message that Washington DC wished to communicate to Vorster was that U.S.-South African relations had now reached a watershed. In particular, Pretoria was given notice that the United States considered the three issues of Rhodesia, Namibia, and apartheid to now be "delinked." Vorster would no longer be offered a "free ride" on apartheid, in return for cooperation elsewhere in the region.²⁶ As Donald McHenry later told the Council on Religion and International Affairs, "We cannot, on one hand, try to reach a resolution of the problems in Rhodesia and Namibia and, on the other hand, mute our voices on the outrageous situation in Soweto."²⁷ The United States was now demanding simultaneous results. As the vice president put it: "We don't think progress on one issue excuses no progress on another."²⁸

In terms of defining exactly what this "progress" should be, Mondale was careful not to proscribe any specific action.²⁹ Prior to Vienna, the administration's internal policy review had concluded that U.S. pressure should seek "A peaceful and progressive transformation of South African society, involving the elimination of institutionalized racism and leading to rule by the majority of all the governed, with full and equal political participation by all and guaranteed rights for minorities."³⁰ Detailed public demands, however, were not specified. Instead, the administration, throughout its term of office, only talked of "full political participation" as being

the requirement.³¹ A particular blueprint for change was thus avoided, and no one model of post-apartheid governance favored. As Mondale stated at the conclusion of the Vienna talks: "If there is progress within South Africa to remove laws such as the pass laws, discrimination laws, these job set-aside laws, laws to permit active political expression without intimidation, those things should be encouraged and appreciated." Ultimately, however, Mondale thought it was up to South Africans themselves to determine their own future.³²

The Carter administration acknowledged that what it demanded of Pretoria would "profoundly change the nature" of U.S.-South African relations.³³ This was not so much because Washington DC had delinked the problems of Rhodesia, Namibia, and apartheid, but because the United States was now prepared to issue an ultimatum in order to achieve its ends. Vice President Mondale made it known at Vienna that in the absence of positive moves from the Republic, in all three of these areas, the United States would "change its position of opposing mandatory sanctions."³⁴ This was a threat that the Carter administration repeated throughout its watch. Secretary of State Vance, for instance, warned Pretoria just two months after Vienna that, "If there is no progress, our relations will inevitably suffer"; a year later he told the Senate Subcommittee on African Affairs, "We have to make it clear that a deterioration of our bilateral relations is inevitable if progress is not made"; in 1979, William Dunfee, a member of Carter's U.N. delegation, informed the General Assembly that if reform from Pretoria was not forthcoming his government "will consider other ways to bring about change"; and even in 1980, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Richard Moose was talking about "our relations with the South Africa Government" being "dependent upon progress toward the elimination of apartheid."³⁵ The message was clear from Vienna onward: Pretoria only had limited time in which to comply with international standards of racial relations. If there was not suitable progress within this (never specified) time frame, the United States was prepared to apply punitive sanctions.

South Africa's response to the Vienna *démarche* was mixed. Once again, Pretoria reiterated that it was fully prepared to cooperate with Washington DC over the Rhodesia and Namibia negotiations. Within bounds, the Republic was willing to exert pressure on Prime Minister Ian Smith vis-à-vis Rhodesia. Likewise, Vorster confirmed that Pretoria was prepared to end its occupation of Namibia, subject to details being confirmed and guarantees being made.³⁶ On the issue of apartheid, however, Vorster was not moved. He accused the United States of interfering in his country's domestic affairs, and the Vienna talks ended, according to Mondale, "on a bitter note."³⁷

This bad feeling was then compounded by the vice president's comments after the summit. A journalist asked Mondale to elaborate on his demand for "full political participation." Was this "one person, one vote," or "some kind of compromise?" The vice president replied: "No, no. It's the same thing. Every citizen should have the same right to vote and every vote should be equally weighted."³⁸ This association of the administration with the phrase one person, one vote angered members of the South African government, and U.S. conservatives alike. Former Under Secretary of State George Ball accused Mondale of

engaging in “on-the-job training in diplomacy” at Vienna. He suggested that, as a result of the vice president’s comments, the White House was now being too proscriptive.³⁹ But, despite some backtracking from the administration over this particular phrase, it was evident that Washington DC was no longer going to tolerate Pretoria simply “refining the status quo” in the Republic.⁴⁰ Genuine change, based on the will of the majority, was now the demand, and punitive sanctions would be deployed to support this requirement. An ultimatum, albeit vague and within a woolly time frame, had been issued.

Carter and U.S. Human Rights Interests in South Africa

With Carter identifying “human rights” to be a “fundamental tenet” of his overall foreign policy, apartheid was not played down by the incoming administration.⁴¹ Indeed, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Carter’s national security advisor, considered southern Africa to be a key testing ground for this new approach to foreign relations.⁴² Other officials concurred. Philip C. Habib, Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, testified before the House Subcommittee on Africa: “President Carter has, on many occasions, stated clearly and forcefully his own personal commitment to human rights. That commitment requires our firm and clear opposition to racial and social injustice wherever it exists. A policy toward southern Africa that is not firmly grounded on this principle would be inconsistent with our national character . . .”⁴³ In this spirit, the United States outlined exactly what it expected from Pretoria. A draft Declaration on Southern Africa, sponsored by the United States, read:

South Africa must:

- (a) Take timely steps to eliminate the policy and practice of apartheid and grant to all elements of the population equal rights including a full and free voice in their destiny.
- (b) Terminate all systems and plans under whatever name which forcibly separate elements of the population on the basis of race whether within a unitary state or in the form of separate political units.
- (c) Bring its illegal occupation of Namibia to a speedy conclusion.
- (d) Facilitate the holding in Namibia on a territory-wide basis of free elections under the aegis of the U.N. and refrain from any steps inconsistent therewith.
- (e) Comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions on the questions of Namibia and Rhodesia.⁴⁴

The question remained, however: how would Carter’s human rights focused demands for southern Africa be supported in terms of action?

The most noticeable shift in relations between the two countries after January 1977 centered on an increased intensity of the U.S. rhetoric used to condemn apartheid. The Republic’s racial laws were variously described as “a clear affront to the dignity and decency of man”; as being “morally abhorrent”; and amounting to “one of the cruelest forms of human rights abuse in the world today.”⁴⁵ It was Andrew Young, however, who did most to maximize the power of this

language. Somewhat “off-message,” the ambassador described the South African government as “illegitimate” in April 1977, while later, in November of that year, he suggested that the Republic required “a different kind of leadership,” Prime Minister Vorster himself being “very much over the hill intellectually and in every other kind of way.”⁴⁶

Young amplified his rhetoric by attending antiapartheid gatherings worldwide, acting, in his own phrase, as Carter’s “point man.”⁴⁷ The ambassador’s travel itinerary included the types of functions that U.S. officials had previously avoided. Whilst Mondale and Vorster were meeting in Vienna, Young was networking in Maputo at the International Conference in Support of the Peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia. He resecured the U.S. invitation to this event after the Ford administration had originally declined to participate. As Young put it, “I have come to Maputo because one of President Carter’s first acts was to demand a new and progressive policy toward Africa. And, I am here because a personal commitment to human rights requires that I be here.”⁴⁸ Similarly, during August 1977, Ambassador Young attended an Action Against Apartheid conference in Lagos. Here, his statement ended with the words “the struggle must continue”: *a luta continua* being a contemporary slogan that resonated with nationalist movements right across southern Africa.⁴⁹ If it was the aim of the Carter administration to “identify” the United States “with the aspirations of the black majority in South Africa,” as Assistant Secretary Moose suggested it was, then the words and symbolism used by Andrew Young made considerable progress toward achieving this goal.⁵⁰

Building pressure on South Africa, the Carter administration took a hard line on Pretoria’s Bantustan program. In April 1977, Washington DC affirmed that it did not accept the legitimacy of the Transkei, and made it known that the United States had “no intention of recognizing any of the other homelands that are declared ‘independent.’”⁵¹ Maintaining this position, Bophuthatswana received no acknowledgment on its independence in December 1977. Tellingly, whereas President Carter thanked Prime Minister Vorster for his message of “cordial congratulations” on the occasion of the 1979 U.S. 4th of July celebrations, identical salutations from Bophuthatswana’s prime minister, Lucas Mangope, drew no response.⁵² President Patrick Mphahlele of Venda received the same treatment. In the U.N. Security Council, Alternate Representative Herbert K. Reis deemed Venda’s 1979 independence “fraudulent.” He proclaimed that there was “no such entity as Venda.”⁵³ Throughout the Carter years, the United States in no way acquiesced to Pretoria’s experiment in grand apartheid.

A similarly strong stance also emerged on the issue of Namibia. Pretoria’s arrangements for an “internal settlement” in this territory were opposed. Undersecretary of State Habib made it clear: “Any attempted solution that excluded important Namibian political groups or that fails to win the acceptance of the international community is no solution at all and will not receive the endorsement of the United States.”⁵⁴ South Africa’s Turnhalle constitution based on tribal representation and favoring minority rights was rejected out of hand. Washington DC’s demand was simple: “We want the people of Namibia to be able to elect their own leaders under conditions of free and fair elections.”⁵⁵

All groups should be involved in building Namibia's future, "especially" the South West Africa Peoples Organisation.⁵⁶

In an attempt to divert South Africa from its Turnhalle plans, the United States helped establish a parallel negotiating forum. Moving talks away from previous unproductive contacts between South Africa and the United Nations, five Western members of the U.N. Security Council came together in April 1977 to form the so-called Western Contact Group (WCG). Chaired by Donald McHenry, this body set about trying to persuade Pretoria to end its occupation of Namibia based on the terms of what would become U.N. Security Council resolution 435 (which called for free and fair elections supervised by a U.N. transitional administration).⁵⁷ What followed was more than a decade of wrangling over the terms of this transition, with both South Africa and SWAPO dragging their feet. South Africa wanted more time to establish its clients in the form of the newly fashioned Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, while SWAPO was reluctant to take part in any process that risked compromising its General Assembly awarded status as the, and in its view the sole, "authentic representative of the Namibian people."⁵⁸ As a consequence, talks regularly stalled.

Despite the "two steps forward and one back" nature of these negotiations, considerable progress was made on Namibia during Carter's watch. South Africa went ahead with its internal elections, and the practical details of Namibia's independence were far from agreed within this period, but the WCG's tireless efforts led by McHenry did keep all the parties talking to one other, and several key conceptual problems were resolved by 1980.

In terms of Namibia, the fundamental consideration for this particular study of bilateral relations is not so much these negotiations in themselves, but the way in which Washington DC was now willing to confront Pretoria. From the beginning, contained within the initial WCG memorandum sent to Vorster, there was an ultimatum. The memo made it clear that if Pretoria did not cooperate with the WCG, further measures would be taken.⁵⁹ The following month, the president himself alluded to this pressure. Carter stated in a television interview: "We've gone to Vorster now and given him a request—a little bit stronger than a request—saying that if you don't do something about Namibia, then we're going to take strong action against you in the United Nations."⁶⁰ And again, this threat was repeated throughout the Carter years.⁶¹ Washington DC gave the impression that sanctions were not that far way, should the Republic fail to make progress.

The Carter administration's approach toward apartheid also put an emphasis on U.S. contacts with the black population of South Africa. In April 1977, for example, the United States announced the expansion of an existing cultural exchange scheme targeting the Republic. The program was revamped to make sure that in the future, participants would match more accurately the racial and social characteristics of the South African people. Moderate whites and favored nationalists, such as Mangosuthu Butulezi, were still welcome in Washington DC, but the revised scheme now also encouraged contacts amongst more diverse groups: the emerging black trade unions, for example, alongside student, educational, religious, and community leaders. Despite persistent interference from the Republic's government, denying many prospective participants

passports, the late 1970s saw the U.S. International Communication Agency funding approximately 75 of these exchanges annually.⁶²

The fall of 1977 saw the Carter administration at its most active and most confrontational in terms of the human rights aspect of its South Africa policy. Pretoria's crackdown on the black consciousness movement had strained relations between the two countries to breaking point. Carter now felt he had to act. Beyond supporting a mandatory U.N. arms embargo (discussed below), Washington DC also deployed a range of diplomatic measures. In the first instance, the U.S. ambassador to South Africa, William G. Bowdler, was temporarily recalled to Washington DC for consultations, while at the United Nations, the United States joined the rest of the Security Council to "strongly condemn" apartheid, expressing "solidarity" with those who struggled against this system.⁶³ Of greater symbolism, however, was Washington DC's response a month earlier to Steve Biko's death. Donald McHenry personally attended Biko's funeral alongside Ambassador Bowdler. Back in New York, Andrew Young was present at a parallel memorial service organized by the U.N.⁶⁴ The United States then expressed "shock" at the verdict of the inquest into Biko's death, after Pretoria had decided to take no legal or disciplinary action against the police interrogators involved. Assistant Secretary Richard Moose observed, "There is a particular horror about the kind of violence, the kind of treatment, perpetrated on Biko."⁶⁵ From this point onward, subsequent political detentions drew regular protests from the Carter administration, Pretoria being confronted through both public and private channels.⁶⁶

Throughout the whole Carter period there was no shortage of challenging rhetoric and symbolism deployed against South Africa. Although far from being satisfied with the administration's overall strategy toward South Africa, in the later 1970s, the antiapartheid movement acknowledged that the United States was now at least saying, if not doing, the right things. There was a wide belief that the executive was sincerely engaged in trying to bring about change: a recognition that had, due to realities and perceptions of "neglect" or "self-interest," eluded previous administrations. Beyond human rights concerns, Carter's management of U.S. strategic interests also reinforced this idea of an administration genuinely engaged.

Carter and U.S. Strategic Interests in South Africa

In a 1977 *Foreign Affairs* article, President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania argued, "by identifying itself in practice with the apartheid regime and its satellites, America is liable to bring about the very things it most fears—the growth of communist influence, the radicalization of the opposition to apartheid, [and] damage to its own economic interests."⁶⁷ The Carter executive was sympathetic to this line of reasoning. There was a belief that worldwide, previous Cold War diplomacy had concentrated too narrowly on strategic interests. Fearing radical opposition forces, the United States had too readily supported authoritarian regimes. The net result had been the pushing of nationalist movements toward Soviet influence.

The Carter administration sought to repair the U.S. reputation in the Third World. It was to be more open minded about the ideological character of postcolonial governments. As the president himself put it, in his 1977 Notre Dame speech, "Being confident of our own future, we are now free of that inordinate fear of communism which once led us to embrace any dictator who joined us in that fear." Carter sought to consider strategic interests within the context of "new global questions of justice, equity, and human rights."⁶⁸

Specifically, in terms of southern Africa, Carter's Notre Dame address argued that the "time has come for the principle of majority rule to be the basis for political order." The United States called for a "rapid and progressive transformation of southern African society" away from racial dominance.⁶⁹ This was demanded not only to stem an abuse of human rights, but also to protect U.S. strategic interests. A future southern Africa based on majority rule was seen as less vulnerable to Soviet adventurism. Secretary of State Vance reasoned: "A negative, reactive American policy that seeks only to oppose Soviet or Cuban involvement in Africa would be both dangerous and futile. Our best course is to help resolve the problems which create opportunities for external intervention."⁷⁰

This change of approach meant that the arguments of former administrations were now less audible around Washington DC. Few decision makers downplayed apartheid in favor of highlighting the Republic's mineral wealth, or its position on the Cape sea route. Indeed, in 1980, Pentagon official Franklin D. Kramer testified that the Department of Defense had "only a limited interest in South Africa." This was the case, he explained, because "other interests" now prevailed over the Republic's strategic value. Consequently, the Department's tracking station outside Pretoria was no longer used.⁷¹

This new type of thinking negated Pretoria's ability to play its "Cold War card." Indeed, as early as January 1977, Zbigniew Brzezinski had told Ambassador Botha that "the U.S. will never intervene in the conflict on the side of a white minority government, even if the communists were involved."⁷² The Carter administration's new confidence in majority rule even led Andrew Young to offer indirect support to the People's Republic of Angola. Despite the government in Luanda not yet being recognized by the United States, Young described the Cuban troop presence in this country as a stabilizing influence.⁷³ Although, once again, the ambassador was a touch "off message", these views served to underscore a new U.S. perspective on southern Africa. Washington DC's strategic compass had had its East-West axis recalibrated to take into account competing North-South imperatives.

It was this fresh strategic perspective, combined with Pretoria's crackdown on the black consciousness movement, that led the Carter administration to support a U.N. mandatory arms embargo against South Africa, imposed on 4 November 1977.⁷⁴ Originally, Washington DC had argued for a delay to be built into this provision to act as an incentive for Pretoria to cease its police offensive. Soon, however, U.S. officials relented. An immediate embargo was agreed in order to respond swiftly to "the recent retrogression of South Africa in its dealing with freedom of the press and with freedom of expression of opinion."⁷⁵ This was the first time that a member state had been subject to Chapter VII sanctions under the U.N. Charter.⁷⁶

The United States thus now operated a near complete embargo of U.S. goods being sold to the South African military and police, whether these items had lethal potential or not. In July 1977, the administration announced that it had removed a "small value exception" from all such sales. Prior to this measure, low-cost items had not been subject to scrutiny, and this loophole had been exploited in order to export shotguns and shells to the Republic. Also in July, a number of additional nonlethal goods were added to the list of proscribed items. It was now illegal to sell psychological stress analysis devices to South Africa, alongside gas masks, bullet proof vests, helmets, shields, and photographic and document authentication equipment used in crime control.⁷⁷

Completing this ban in the fall of 1977, the United States withdrew its senior naval attaché from Pretoria, in addition to announcing the termination of the sale of all military spare parts to South Africa.⁷⁸ Likewise, Carter also took this opportunity to reclose the gray area concessions opened by the Nixon administration. Once again, restrictions were placed on the sale of light aircraft to South Africa, the granting of travel visas to the Republic's higher-ranking military personnel, and the export of computer equipment with potential military applications.⁷⁹ Indeed, by February 1978, there were no gray area loopholes left. The administration, pursuant to the Export Administration Act of 1969, ordered the denial of the export or reexport of "*any* commodity" to South Africa or Namibia if the exporter "knows or has reason to know" that this item will be "sold to or used by" military or police entities in these countries.⁸⁰

The United States also tightened its export regulations with regard to the transfer of nuclear technology to the Republic under the Carter administration. During the mid-1970s, bilateral relations had become increasingly sensitive in this field due to growing but unsubstantiated evidence that Pretoria was developing a nuclear weapons program. Until 1975, the United States had cooperated fully with the Republic.⁸¹ Washington DC had always been content with Pretoria's assurances that this program was solely for peaceful purposes, and that safeguards akin to those operated by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) were being maintained. In August 1977, however, Soviet satellites identified a facility being built in the Kalahari Desert capable of testing nuclear explosions. Combined with the knowledge that South Africa had developed its own uranium enrichment process, this incident focused attention on Pretoria's reluctance to sign the U.N. Non-Proliferation Treaty, and its refusal to place all its nuclear activities under independently monitored IAEA safeguards.

The 1977 Kalahari incident was followed, in September 1979, by indications of a nuclear detonation having taken place in the south Atlantic. U.S. satellites had picked up a "double flash," the signature of an atomic explosion. South Africa was immediately suspected of having conducted a nuclear weapons test. Although air samples collected by the U.S. Air Force and relevant seismic recordings failed to verify a detonation, doubts over Pretoria's culpability and intentions remained.⁸² Taking all the available evidence into account, the Central Intelligence Agency concluded that South Africa had, or was near to having, the means of building and delivering a nuclear weapon, but the Agency was unable to confirm if any specific devices were operational.⁸³

The CIA was not too far off the mark. During 1977, Prime Minister Vorster had indeed directed the Republic's scientists to build nuclear weapons, and by April 1978 South Africa had developed an independent deterrent strategy.⁸⁴ In total, the Republic was to build six nuclear devices, none of which possessed a tactical offensive capability, nor were any of these devices ever detonated.⁸⁵ Most likely, the September 1979 double flash can be explained by a misinterpretation of satellite intelligence.⁸⁶

Initially, the Carter administration sought to remain engaged with Pretoria over nuclear issues. It continued ongoing negotiations concerning outstanding shipments of enriched uranium bound for the Republic from the United States. These consignments had been suspended by the Ford administration. Carter offered to resume the export of this uranium on condition that the Republic's government sign the NPT. Likewise, the United States tried to persuade Pretoria that the ratification of this treaty would also be the best way of saving the Republic's position on the governing body of the International Atomic Energy Agency.⁸⁷

Considerable effort was made in this field because the administration feared that an altercation over nuclear matters would only serve to persuade South Africa to break completely with IAEA safeguards, and encourage a "go-it-alone-path."⁸⁸ Even in the fall of 1977, when the mandatory arms embargo was put in place, and the administration was at its most confrontational, nuclear transfers were downplayed. Even Andrew Young was being conciliatory on this issue. The ambassador argued, "I think by maintaining some kind of relationship we do have the possibility of influencing them to sign the nonproliferation treaty and accepting all the safeguards . . . If you break the relationship altogether, there is no way to monitor and it is almost because you can't trust them that you have to stay close to them."⁸⁹ Indeed, by June 1978, the ongoing negotiations had reached a point where the *Washington Post* felt confident enough to report, albeit erroneously, that South Africa would sign the NPT "perhaps by the end of the week."⁹⁰ Pretoria was talking seriously about conforming to international standards. In this respect, the Carter administration never sought to use nuclear materials in any package of punitive sanctions.

By default, however, this did occur. By 1978, the administration did operate a nuclear embargo against the Republic. Pretoria's continued refusal to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty left little room for maneuver. Washington DC's dual strategy of offering to resume enriched uranium shipments, together with political protection in the chambers of the IAEA, failed to win any concessions. Consequently, the administration's hand was forced. In November 1978, the United States arranged the return of South Africa's pre-payment for the undelivered uranium contracts. Although U.S. officials made it known that they had not given up entirely on the possibility of future sales, the prospects of such transactions now looked bleak.⁹¹

Indeed, bilateral relations on this issue had become subsumed by a wider U.S. commitment in this field. In February 1978, the U.S. Congress passed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act. Under this legislation, U.S. corporations or individuals could no longer legally sell nuclear materials and technology to

any country unless the recipient state accepted comprehensive IAEA scrutiny and were party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.⁹² South Africa failed to meet both these criteria, and to further disrupt any potential cooperation in this area, the Republic's credentials were rejected, against the vote of the United States, at the 1979 annual meeting of the IAEA.⁹³ Effectively, then, in the strategic field, the United States now operated a nuclear embargo alongside its arms ban.

Carter and U.S. Economic Interests in South Africa

Whereas the Carter administration was willing to confront South Africa in the human rights and strategic fields, it was not prepared to utilize punitive economic sanctions against apartheid. Although U.S. officials regularly hinted that, in the absence of any reform, further measures would be deployed against Pretoria, in reality, this never happened. Restrictions on trade or investment were not yet considered appropriate.⁹⁴ Instead, Washington DC projected a positive view of economic relations between the two countries. It was thought a continued international corporate presence in the Republic could be a potential tool for change.

The most severe economic sanction that the Carter executive took against South Africa was to reduce the maximum time period that the U.S. Export-Import Bank would risk exposure in this market. U.S. corporations could now only receive loan and guarantee facilities for a maximum of 42 months. This reversed the Nixon 1971 positive sanction that had extended this period to 10 years. Explaining its decision, the administration made it clear that these new restrictions were prompted by commercial realities, and that this action was not a political gesture *per se*.⁹⁵

During 1978, however, the executive was forced to defer to the federal legislature in this particular area of policy. The U.S. Congress was to use the Ex-Im Bank very much for political purposes. The Evans Amendment, as discussed above, was appended to the Export-Import Bank Act.⁹⁶ U.S. firms were now required to demonstrate good employment practices in order to qualify for any public support from this institution. As corporations were unable or unwilling to meet the new application criteria, U.S. public exposure in this market began to fall significantly (see table 6.1).⁹⁷

The Carter administration voiced its opposition to the Evans Amendment.⁹⁸ This objection was not just an automatic retort to the Congress because of curtailed executive flexibility; the unease of the White House was more deep-seated than this. This was because, beyond the arms embargo, the Carter administration rejected any punitive economic sanctions targeting the Republic. This was demonstrated dramatically on 31 October 1977, when the United States issued three successive vetoes in the Security Council.⁹⁹ The U.N.'s proposed economic embargo was considered so inappropriate by the administration that, by using its veto, Washington DC was prepared to risk all the human rights rhetoric and antiapartheid symbolism that it had expended in the previous nine months.

Table 6.1 U.S. Export-Import Bank exposure in South Africa (US\$ millions), June 1971–March 1980

June 1971	June 1974	June 1976	March 1977	March 1980
33,813	109,423	259,682	204,000	179,859

Source: U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. Committee on International Relations. Subcommittee on International Resources, Food, and Energy. *Resource development in South Africa and U.S. policy: hearings...* [94th Congress, 2nd Session: May and June 1976]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1976. 254; U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs. Subcommittee on International Trade, Investment, and Monetary Policy. *Export-Import Bank and trade with South Africa: hearing...* [95th Congress: 2nd Session, February, 1978]. Washington DC: GPO, 1978. 2; and U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittees on International Economic Policy and Trade, on Africa, and on International Organizations. *U.S. Policy toward South Africa: hearings...* [96th Congress, 2nd session: April, May and June 1980]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1980. 773.

At the heart of Carter's opposition to punitive economic sanctions were four interlocking arguments. The White House believed that such measures simply would not work; that isolation would only serve to build a *laager* mentality amongst whites; that there was uncertainty over whether black South Africans wanted action of this kind; and that punitive strategies would only hinder progress already being made in the Republic.¹⁰⁰ As an alternative to comprehensive sanctions, Andrew Young, this time very much "on-message," called for a more nuanced strategy. The ambassador observed that historically, he knew of no total economic boycott that had been effective. Instead, he argued that limited and targeted actions were the way forward.¹⁰¹ Richard Moose likewise defended this approach. In August 1978, the assistant secretary argued before Congress that the administration had already "conveyed a strong and serious message to Pretoria." Evidencing this, he noted the mandatory arms embargo, alongside the withdrawal of the U.S. naval attaché. He reported that no further "specific actions" were contemplated at this time. Instead, the administration felt it was now "essential to give these actions time to work." Although Moose again repeated a vague threat of future action, no additional economic sanctions were deployed during the remainder of Carter's watch.¹⁰²

The administration favored an alternative path. President Carter himself had let it be known that he considered "American businessmen can be a constructive force achieving racial justice within South Africa. I think the weight of our investments there, the value the South Africans place on access to American capital and technology can be used as a positive force . . ."¹⁰³ The administration's thesis was that capitalist development itself would help erode apartheid. Racial segregation was acting as a break on the Republic's economy. It therefore followed that South African business leaders, seeking a more liberal commercial environment, could become a prominent constituency for change. During May 1977, explaining this thesis to South African corporate leaders on their own turf

in Johannesburg, Andrew Young underlined this link between business interests and racial reform. Reflecting on his own experience within the U.S. civil rights movement, the ambassador argued, "When in Atlanta, Georgia, five banks decided that it was bad business to have racial turmoil, racial turmoil ceased."¹⁰⁴

The administration looked to U.S. corporations to act as role models for their South African counterparts. As the State Department put it: "We believe that American business in South Africa can be a real force for positive change in two ways: first, by improving opportunities for their own Black employees; and, second, by demonstrating to others the advantages of enlightened policies."¹⁰⁵ It was argued that using U.S. capital in this positive manner would have a far greater impact than any embargo.¹⁰⁶ In this respect, at the heart of the Carter administration's foreign policy toward South Africa was its endorsement of the Statement of Principles of U.S. Firms with Affiliates in the Republic of South Africa: the so-called Sullivan Principles (see table 6.2).¹⁰⁷

The Sullivan Principles were drawn up under the auspices of the Reverend Leon H. Sullivan. Sullivan was a board member of General Motors, and had successfully developed projects linking businesses with inner-city community groups in the United States. Using this experience, he turned his attention to corporate responsibility within South Africa. In March 1977, 12 of the largest U.S. firms came together to sign the Sullivan Principles.¹⁰⁸ These businesses, to the extent that this was permissible under South African law, pledged to treat all their South African employees equally, irrespective of race, whilst proactively seeking to improve the welfare of these individuals and their families. By the end of its first year, over one hundred firms had signed this code of practice, and by 1980, in excess of US\$12 million was being spent on philanthropic programs associated with this initiative (see table 6.3).

Table 6.2 Statement of Principles of U.S. Firms with Affiliates in the Republic of South Africa (The Sullivan Principles), 1 March 1977

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1. Non-segregation of the races in all eating, comfort, and work facilities.
 2. Equal and fair employment practices for all employees.
 3. Equal pay for all employees doing equal or comparable work for the same period of time.
 4. Initiation of and development of training programs that will prepare, in substantial numbers, blacks and other nonwhites for supervisory, administrative, clerical, and technical jobs.
 5. Increasing the number of blacks and other nonwhites in management and supervisory positions.
 6. Improving the quality of life for blacks and other nonwhites outside the work environment in such areas as housing, transportation, school, recreation, and health facilities.

We agree to further implement these principles. Where implementation requires a modification of existing South African working conditions, we will seek such modification through appropriate channels.

We believe that the implementation of the foregoing principles is consistent with respect for human dignity and will contribute greatly to the general economic welfare of all the people of South Africa.

Table 6.3 Number of Sullivan Principles signatories, and U.S. corporate welfare programs in South Africa, 1977–1988

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Sullivan Principles signatories</i>	<i>Number of signatory companies reporting (percentage)</i>	<i>Total U.S. corporate spending on South African welfare programs (US\$ millions)</i>
1977	105	—	—
1978	117	94.2	3.6
1979	135	94.2	3.2
1980	137	87.0	12.8
1981	144	87.1	16.3
1982	146	82.3	20.2
1983	120	88.4	22.4
1984	128	89.8	10.1
1985	181	80.7	17.6
1986	184	70.1	25.9
1987	92	100.0	33.2

Note: The fall in funding during 1984 and 1985 can largely be accounted for by the collapse of the South African Rand. One Rand was worth 90 cents in 1983, falling to 45 cents during 1984. By 1987, the Rand had only managed to claw its wayback to 49 cents.

Source: Arthur D. Little. *[Annual] reports of the signatory companies to the statement of principles for South Africa*. Philadelphia: Industrial Council for Equal Opportunity Principles, 1978–1987; and Task Group of the Sullivan Signatories. *Meeting the mandate for change: a progress report on the application of the Sullivan Principles by U.S. companies in South Africa*. New York: Industry Support Unit, 1984.

Although official U.S. policy still remained to “neither encourage, nor discourage” investment in South Africa, through its support of the Sullivan Principles, and by encouraging U.S. firms to act as a potential agent of change, Washington DC was now effectively endorsing an international business presence in South Africa.¹⁰⁹ The Carter administration, despite its confrontation of the South African government, thus stood firmly in the way of any antiapartheid campaign based on economic sanctions.

With an absence of any such punitive measures, U.S. commercial contacts with South Africa thrived during the four years under consideration. By the end of the Carter term of office, U.S. transnational corporations had US\$2,350 million invested in this market, gaining incredible returns of 28 percent. Similarly, U.S. exports to the Republic grew during Carter’s watch, measuring US\$2,463 by 1980, while imports to the United States almost quadrupled in the five years leading up to this point.¹¹⁰ There were, however, some concerns over South Africa’s future prospects amongst U.S. investors, especially given the new trade union activity emerging in the Republic, the “hassle factor” from the domestic divestment campaign back home, and as a consequence of Polaroid’s 1977 withdrawal, but the performance figures expressed above were hard to argue with.¹¹¹ The profits remaining in this market persuaded most corporations to remain actively engaged in the Republic, and the Carter administration supported their decision to do this.

Carter's South Africa Policy: An Assessment

During Congressional hearings in August 1978, U.S. Representative Don Bonker asked of Richard Moose: "It seems we have reached an impasse between our policies and rhetoric on one hand, and our ineffectiveness to do anything on the other. Are you saying, then, to this committee that we are helpless in confronting the Government of South Africa on its apartheid policies ...?"¹¹² Bonker's frustration stemmed from the fact that after the flurry of activity in the spring of 1977, and since the imposition of the mandatory arms embargo in the fall of that year, it appeared that the Carter administration had nothing further to bring to its South Africa policy.

Later, toward the end of the administration's term of office, Moose was again invited to express what he considered the Carter executive had achieved with respect to the Republic. He responded that the administration's persistent attention and continued rhetoric had left Pretoria, and the world, with no doubts over where the United States stood on the issue of apartheid. Moose argued, "no U.S. administration [could] permit itself to follow the policy of neglect that characterized our actions 10 years ago, or 4 years ago."¹¹³ The Carter administration had thus put an end to perceptions that the United States was content with a policy of benign neglect, or even that the United States favored a tilt toward the whites. The language directed at Pretoria, the activities of Ambassador Young, and Carter's human rights stance had changed the relationship between the United States and South Africa.

This much was true. As a result of the Carter approach, Washington DC was now evidently more committed to addressing the issue of apartheid, and less vulnerable to criticisms of collusion with Pretoria. Yet, Bonker's frustration remained, as did the dissatisfaction of the growing U.S. antiapartheid movement. Carter's rhetoric and symbolism had not won clear concessions from Pretoria. Apartheid appeared unaffected. As French officials privately observed: "Andy Young is not a policy."¹¹⁴ Representative Charles Diggs expressed the same view publicly. He accused the administration of operating a policy of "verbal condemnation of Apartheid without a decisive program of action."¹¹⁵

In reality, Washington DC and Pretoria had reached fixed positions by the end of 1977. Carter had played his hand early, by issuing a vague ultimatum at Vienna, just five months after entering office. Brzezinski had expressed concern over this tactic at the time. He feared that "a visit by the Vice President would tend to be a one-shot affair, simply raising expectations and ending in disappointments."¹¹⁶ And this is largely what occurred. When Pretoria failed to respond to Carter's *démarche*, Washington DC was unwilling to up the ante and unleash harsher sanctions against South Africa. Economic measures, whether incremental or comprehensive in nature, were off the agenda. The 1977 fall crackdown prompted a completion of measures that ensured the United States did not assist Pretoria in the enforcement of apartheid, via the imposition of the mandatory arms embargo and supportive tinkering of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, but, however symbolic these actions may have been, they had little additional practical effect. The United States, after all, had operated a comprehensive arms embargo against the Republic since 1963.

Indeed, Pretoria, instead of responding to the Vienna *démarche* and the mandatory embargo, simply battened down the hatches and waited for a more sympathetic administration to arrive in Washington DC.¹¹⁷ The punitive measures applied by the Carter administration were only minor irritants. The Republic was now largely self-sufficient in the production of armaments, while its domestic nuclear program could cope with the termination of enriched uranium supplies from the United States. Where key components could not be fashioned internally, it was still possible to acquire equipment on the black market. Similarly, Pretoria had also developed military and nuclear relations with other pariah states, most notably Israel and North Korea.¹¹⁸ The South African government was so confident in its position by April 1979 that it even chose to risk further confrontation with Washington DC. The Republic expelled the remaining U.S. military attachés stationed in South Africa over a spying incident.¹¹⁹

Pretoria's behavior in this instance underlined the limited leverage of the United States. The Vienna *démarche* was sidestepped, and the administration's bluff called. The rhetoric continued after November 1977, as did vague threats of future action but administration officials began to be less bullish about their chances of persuading Pretoria to mend its ways. In October 1978, Anthony Lake told a conference in San Francisco that, "there are limits to our ability to encourage change in South Africa."¹²⁰ The president himself let it be known that:

Our response was measured, and deliberately did not involve all available steps. It is our view that the problems of apartheid will not submit to either an easy or quick solution. Moreover, it is clear that our influence and leverage within South Africa are limited . . . , and as we see this as a struggle over the long haul, we believe it quite important to husband our resources and use them when they promise to do the most good.¹²¹

Indeed, Brzezinski's memoirs paint a gloomy picture of this post-Vienna period: "We were failing to deliver enough to satisfy the black Africans and yet at the same time we were frightening the whites into unshakable intransigence . . . we had only just begun to recognize the fundamental outlines of the problem."¹²²

It has been suggested that the Carter administration, as a response to its failure to wring concessions from Pretoria over apartheid, cut its losses and concentrated instead on Namibia and Rhodesia.¹²³ As early as April 1977, for example, Carter had told the press, "The difficult question is, you know, how much to push the South African Government and drive them into a corner and alienate them from us, because to a major degree the South African Government is a stabilizing influence . . . and they have a major part to play in the peaceful resolution of Rhodesia and Namibia."¹²⁴ Likewise in 1980, the State Department conceded:

At times in the past three years we have found ourselves in the tactical situation that the ongoing negotiating process concerning Rhodesia or Namibia or both required that we secure either the agreement or acceptance of the South African Government to some point in dispute; it is possible that in an effort to secure that

agreement, the need for which could not be postponed, we may have avoided actions that we might have taken in other circumstances.¹²⁵

Richard Moose confirmed this reality after he left office. In a 1989 interview, asked if there was a conscious decision to relax the pressure on South Africa in return for assistance on negotiations elsewhere in the region, the former assistant secretary initially replied that this did not happen. After a little reflection, however, Moose revised his response. He offered that this, "de facto, may have happened."¹²⁶

This notion that the Carter administration latterly downgraded tackling apartheid also ties into the thesis that, by this time, Brzezinski had generally pushed U.S. foreign policy back into a more traditional mould.¹²⁷ Carter's human rights approach was now tempered by Cold War realities. Within Africa itself there was increased Cuban activity. Alongside the fact that Cuban troops remained stationed in Angola, Havana had colluded with Angolan forces invading Zaire. Likewise, Cuban troops had also seen active service in Ethiopia. Outside Africa, there was additional Cold War maneuvering: Soviet-backed forces had invaded Cambodia, Washington DC had lost Iran as a client state, Moscow was backing insurgent forces in the Yemen, and the invasion of Afghanistan was imminent. Faced with these realities, as Dirk Kurnet has it, President Carter became a "born-again geopolitician."¹²⁸

Brzezinski saw his role vis-à-vis U.S. policy toward southern Africa to make "certain that we did not ignore the Soviet-Cuban military presence in Africa to the point that the conservative whites in South Africa would be fearful of accepting any compromise solution." In this respect, the national security advisor considered that "Andy and Cy, along with most of those at State, took an excessively benign view of Soviet and Cuban penetration of Africa, underestimating its strategic implications."¹²⁹ Indeed, from week one of the Carter administration, the U.S. media were running stories highlighting a rift between Brzezinski and Young over southern Africa.¹³⁰ By June 1978, many thought that Brzezinski's views had become dominant. During this month, the president warned, "we and our African friends want to see a continent that is free of the dominance of outside powers ... The persistent and increasing involvement of the Soviet Union and Cuba in Africa could deny this hopeful vision."¹³¹ Hence, Carter began to concentrate on reducing the opportunities for Soviet influence in the region, seeking a rapid move toward majority rule in Namibia and Rhodesia. The confrontation over apartheid was shelved as a result.

A reassessment of Cold War priorities may have contributed to the tailing off of Washington DC's pressure on Pretoria after November 1977. The president may or may not have had a geopolitical epiphany. The reality was, however, that the Carter administration had nothing left in its arsenal it was prepared to fire at Pretoria. This was little to do with the Cold War. The administration simply thought it inappropriate to escalate the conflict further through utilizing economic sanctions. It preferred to wait and see if previous actions would prompt change. As a consequence of this stalemate over apartheid, Washington DC was now free to concentrate on Namibia and Rhodesia. It made sense to

address these issues given Pretoria's refusal to act in its domestic area and Carter's reluctance to up the stakes. Geopolitical events may have helped U.S. officials turn their attentions to Namibia and Rhodesia, but even without this Cold War input, it was unlikely the Carter administration would have launched any new initiative over apartheid.

Philip Habib, early in the Carter years, had expressed the administration's desire to avoid a policy in which the United States simply described the situation in South Africa, and then condemned it, but this is more or less where Washington DC was in 1980. Undoubtedly, Carter's willingness to verbally confront Pretoria over its racial policies had assisted developments in the region. Richard Moose reflecting on the administration's record in southern Africa noted: "Forty-six months later Zimbabwe is independent, the Namibian negotiations have been substantially advanced, and white South Africa is engaged in an agonizing reappraisal of the grand design of apartheid." An administration in Washington DC less engaged or less attuned to protecting human rights may not have seen any of this change.

Yet, Moose was honest enough to also acknowledge that whatever reform apartheid had undergone between 1977 and 1980, it would "be a mistake to interpret the difference as evidence of progress ... we are still dealing with a government that is pursuing a policy of separate political development ...". The assistant secretary could point to no tangible concessions gained from the Republic's government emerging either from the Carter administration's policy of confrontation or its backing of a continued international business presence in South Africa.¹³² It is likely that Washington DC's efforts of this period had contributed to the talk of reform found in the Republic at this time, but the demand was now for rapid change. Carter did not deliver this. U.S. strategic interests had been downplayed in South Africa for the sake of protecting human rights, but the administration was not prepared to sacrifice U.S. economic interests in this country. Stalemate had been the result.

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CHAPTER 7

“NEITHER THE CLANDESTINE EMBRACE NOR THE POLECAT TREATMENT”: THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION, 1981–1984

It was the administration of Ronald Reagan that formulated the most comprehensive U.S. foreign policy toward South Africa. An initial period, commencing with Reagan’s inauguration in 1981 through to the summer of 1984, saw a rare coherence in the U.S. response to apartheid. This consistency can largely be accounted for by a strategy fashioned in the Africa Bureau of the State Department. Under the guidance of Reagan’s Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Chester Crocker, a policy of “Constructive Engagement” was put in place. Washington DC quietly offered the South African government positive sanctions in an attempt to enhance the ambition of reforms already underway in this country.

Events of the mid-1980s, however, particularly a new wave of unrest in the Republic’s townships, undermined these efforts of quiet engagement. Indeed, by 1986, the situation had deteriorated so much that the U.S. Congress felt compelled to intervene. A package of comprehensive economic sanctions was enacted by the federal legislature, overriding a presidential veto in the process. Chapters eight and nine respectively tackle the sanctions and post-sanctions phases of the Reagan South Africa policy. The task of the current chapter is to explore the administration’s approach prior to this mid-decade turmoil, addressing the initial period between 1981 and 1984.

In terms of its structure, the chapter begins by assessing the concept of Constructive Engagement itself. What exactly did this strategy seek, what were its premises, and how did this approach intend to assist the eradication of apartheid? Answers to these questions will provide a good overview of this policy. Next, the chapter moves on to evaluate the implementation of Constructive Engagement. This analysis is structured around the now familiar themes of strategic interests, human rights priorities, and economic concerns. Each of these fields is examined in turn. A conclusion is then drawn suggesting that this initial application of Constructive Engagement failed. This was primarily due to three factors.

Ultimately, the Reagan administration's strategy floundered as a consequence of Pretoria's intransigence. The Republic's government chose not to take up the opportunities offered it by Washington DC. This then left U.S. policy vulnerable in two further areas: first, the Reagan executive had not sufficiently engaged the Republic's black population; and, second, no adequate constituency of support for this policy was built at home.

The Concept of Constructive Engagement

Constructive Engagement, despite charges to the contrary, did not cynically seek to preserve the white dominated status quo in South Africa.¹ This policy represented a genuine attempt to promote change. Its formulators recognized that U.S. strategic and economic interests could never be fully realized as long as the government in Pretoria continued to practise apartheid. Racial conflict benefited Soviet opportunism, as well as disrupting profitable commercial relations. Acknowledging this, Chester Crocker, in a 1980 *Foreign Affairs* article, outlined a potential U.S. response to apartheid. In this "academic essay cum job application," written on the eve of his nomination as assistant secretary of state, he set out his stall. "Clearly, the fundamental goal," Crocker postulated, was the emergence of a South African society "with which the United States can pursue its varied interests in a full and friendly relationship, without constant embarrassment or political damage."² The question was: how could Constructive Engagement achieve this?

Crocker was highly critical of past U.S. policy toward South Africa. He reasoned, "The West can neither embrace South Africa, in its current form, nor can it walk away from the problem."³ This, Crocker contended, had been the respective approaches of the Nixon and Carter administrations. Many liberal opponents of the Reagan administration accused Constructive Engagement of merely being a rerun of the Nixon/Ford NSSM39 policy, but Crocker himself dismissed this earlier strategy as being one of "radishes and twigs," and not the right combination of carrots and sticks.⁴ The Nixon/Ford Communication policy had resulted in the United States giving South Africa "the 'backburner' treatment." A lack of time or resources committed to this strategy, Crocker charged, had left NSSM39 little chance of success. The result was a dangerous neglect of the region, where nothing had been done to ease racial conflict, which itself had contributed to the Cuban intervention in Angola.⁵

Constructive Engagement's managers were even more critical of the Carter administration. Although Carter's policy was certainly an active one, Crocker warned, in a 1978 article, "The administration has wrapped itself in a straight-jacket of principles which limits maneuver and invites invidious comparisons of its promises with its performance."⁶ The condemnatory rhetoric issued by the Carter administration resulted only in alienating the Republic's government, discouraging any kind of external engagement. U.S. strategy in this period also "built up expectations of the disenfranchised in South Africa and consistently delivered nothing."⁷ This gap between rhetoric and performance had thus resulted in stalemate, and a South Africa policy as ineffectual as NSSM39.

Constructive Engagement would be different. It was designed as neither a "clandestine embrace nor the polecat treatment."⁸ Crocker sought instead to build a centrist consensus, some kind of synthesis of Carter's activism and human rights concerns, with NSSM39's realist approach. The new assistant secretary believed that this was the best way in which U.S. interests could be protected.

The Reagan administration formulated Constructive Engagement in response to a changing situation in South Africa. This policy's key premise was that a "window of opportunity" had emerged in the Republic.⁹ Optimism had been generated by the reformist credentials of the P.W. Botha government. In August 1979, the Republic's prime minister had declared that South Africa must "adapt or die." He warned that apartheid was "the recipe for permanent conflict."¹⁰ These words were in stark contrast to the racist talk of Afrikaner politicians during the 1950s and 1960s. Spurred on by economic failings, a growing internal security problem, and international ostracism, the National Party now sought to save the vestiges of white privilege in South Africa by reforming apartheid. The Reagan administration endeavored to tap into this new thinking, considering it the most realistic way of improving the human rights situation in this country.

The reforms P.W. Botha proposed were significant, if not far-reaching. Legislation began to be enacted to create a black middle class in the Republic's townships. Although the vast majority of South Africans were to continue to live in the homelands, those blacks already in the Republic's cities, and judged critical for the (white) economy, would be granted limited social and economic rights. "Legitimate" township residents, for example, were now permitted to secure 99-year leaseholds on their homes, and state resources were invested to upgrade appalling social conditions. Reforms also occurred legalizing trade unions and broadening the categories of jobs blacks could hold. A number of petty apartheid laws, such as the Mixed Marriages Act, were also muted as areas where there could be future change.

However, the most visible reform the South African government undertook during this 1981 to 1984 period concerned the Republic's constitution. The new 1984 dispensation attempted to provide representation for the Republic's colored and Asian communities via a complicated system of power sharing. A tricameral parliament was established, bringing these two groups into the institutions of central government. This constitution still met the white population's demand for "group rights," which effectively amounted to a white veto, but the new parliament did give Asians and coloreds a semblance of political influence. The 1984 dispensation made no provision for the majority African population, who were still to be represented through their allocated homelands.

Although no one in Washington DC considered the above developments to represent a wholesale repeal of apartheid, nonetheless significant changes were afoot. The Reagan administration considered this reform worth backing. A foreign policy engaging this reform process, it was argued, had more chance of assisting genuine progress than the alternative path of opposing it via debilitating punitive sanctions. As Crocker observed, "For the first time in a generation, the obscure politics of Afrikanerdom are showing clear signs of a noteworthy flexibility. The Botha government has committed itself to a moderate reformist

process whose ultimate end remains utterly unclear. . . . The current fluidity does not make meaningful change certain, but it does make it possible.”¹¹ Constructive Engagement was about exploring and promoting this possibility.

In this respect, Constructive Engagement sought to back “reform from above.” The administration called for a “tone of empathy” with white South Africa. Peaceful change, it was proposed, would predominantly come through white institutions. After all, Crocker argued, “there is little reason to question the near-term survivability of white power in South Africa.”¹² Consequently, Constructive Engagement aimed to give the government in Pretoria space and time to reform its own society. There would be no demand from Washington DC for an immediate settlement based on the principle of one person, one vote. Crocker considered such demands to only “keep U.S. policy immobilized by a distant objective.”¹³ Instead, an evolutionary transition from apartheid would be acceptable to the United States, as long as the National Party’s strategy represented genuine reform. As the assistant secretary of state put it, “although we may continue to differ on apartheid and cannot condone a system of institutionalized racial differentiation we can cooperate with a society undergoing change.”¹⁴

But how exactly did the formulators of Constructive Engagement intend their policy to aid this evolutionary reform? Crocker, and his State Department colleagues, after all, made it very clear that the U.S. leverage over Pretoria was limited. The assistant secretary had written earlier, “we continue to suffer from an inflated notion of American power, despite considerable contrary evidence. The recent American experience, most notably in Iran, should have made it clear that effective coercive influence is a rare commodity in foreign policy.”¹⁵ Herman Nickel, the Reagan administration’s ambassador to Pretoria, was of a similar opinion. In 1983, he declared, “We cannot dictate policy to any state in the region, nor would we want to.”¹⁶ Constructive Engagement was a policy designed to work within these limits of leverage. In this respect, positive sanctions of persuasion were favored, rather than confrontational rhetoric or additional embargoes. As it will be seen below, these sweeteners were applied respectively in the strategic, human rights, and economic arenas.

Constructive Engagement’s Strategic “Sweeteners”

Ronald Reagan arrived in Washington DC on a wave of anticommunist defiance. The president invoked a new patriotism encouraging the country to “stand tall” once more. The overriding foreign policy objective of the new administration was to rid the United States of its “Vietnam Syndrome.” This would permit a resumption of the confrontation of the Soviet Union. Moscow, after all, was “the focus of evil in the modern world.”¹⁷ Other states too were encouraged to prosecute this “second Cold War.” Pro-Western partners were courted globally, South Africa included. Arguments highlighting Pretoria’s strategic minerals and its position on the Cape Sea route were thus once again back in vogue.¹⁸ As President Reagan himself asked of South Africa, in 1981, “Can we abandon a country that has stood beside us in every war we’ve ever fought, a country that strategically is essential to the free world . . . ?”¹⁹

A shared ideological opposition to communism, and a common commitment to containment, made strategic contacts between the United States and South Africa an ideal focus for Constructive Engagement. Positive sanctions and closer contact in this field, it was thought, would enhance Washington DC's influence over the Republic. It was a "win-win" situation. The United States could pursue its Cold War goals with Pretoria, generating mutual trust and understanding, with any credit generated as a consequence of this cordial relationship being directed at persuading South Africa to accelerate its reforms of apartheid.

Joseph Churba, a campaign aide, had gone too far when he stated in 1980 that, if he were elected, Ronald Reagan would lift the arms embargo, and permit the U.S. navy to resume calling at the Republic's ports.²⁰ The arms embargo was too symbolic of the U.S. disapproval of apartheid for this to occur. Churba's comments were therefore quickly refuted by the Reagan campaign.²¹ Yet, it was a question of degree. The new administration was prepared to alter the arms embargo at its fringes. Once again, regulations guiding dual-purpose civilian/military sales were altered.

One of the first acts of Constructive Engagement was to reverse President Carter's 1978 total proscription of U.S. sales to the South African military and police. Initially, from June 1981 onward, companies could once again sell medical supplies to Pretoria. After March 1982, a wider range of "non-lethal" items were permitted.²² This latter category included food, clothing, personal hygiene effects, nonstrategic chemicals, calculators, personal computers, copying machines, and word processors.²³ A third installment of this relaxation of gray area equipment occurred in January 1983. Sales of "nonstrategic industrial, chemical, petroleum and transportation equipment" were now authorized.²⁴ The administration explained that while other aspects of the arms embargo remained in place, providing "a strong symbolic and political disassociation of the United States from the enforcement of apartheid," Carter's total ban was merely "counterproductive" and had "no effect."²⁵ The 1978 restrictions had only served to alienate the South African government, while excluding U.S. businesses from profiting in this market. Bohdan Denysyk, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Export Administration, put the lifting of these restrictions in a context that, "We are taking small steps toward them, they should be taking small steps toward us."²⁶

U.S. law enforcement agencies still prosecuted individuals and companies violating the core arms embargo, but under Constructive Engagement, the Departments of Commerce, Defense, and State generally became more flexible in their granting of export licenses.²⁷ In 1979, for example, the State Department's Office of Armaments Control had only authorized licenses for goods valued at US\$25,000 destined for the Republic. In 1980, no licenses were issued at all. By contrast, in the first three years of the Reagan administration, goods to the value of US\$28.3 million were approved.²⁸

Constructive Engagement also permitted increased direct contact between the security agencies of the United States and South Africa. In 1982, the administration approved the visa application of a South African police officer attending a course on public relations run by the Chicago Police Department.

A year later, another police officer from the Republic undertook instruction at the U.S. Federal Law Enforcement Training Centre in Georgia, the first South African to do so since 1975. The State Department also accepted a request from Pretoria for some of its coast guard personnel to be trained in the United States.²⁹ Perhaps more symbolic than these minor positive sanctions, however, was the Reagan administration's 1982 gesture of permitting military attaché representation to return to its former level.³⁰ This representation had initially been cut in the fall of 1977 as a protest against Pretoria's crackdown on the black consciousness movement, and then as a consequence of a spying quarrel between the two countries.

This spirit of cooperation also encouraged a closer working relationship between the intelligence services of the United States and South Africa. Pretoria's ambassador to the United States, Donald Sole, recounted how, with the arrival of the Reagan administration, "our relations with the Pentagon steadily improved and there was an increasingly useful exchange of military intelligence . . ."³¹ Periodic press reports detailed how the Republic's Silvermine eavesdropping facility frequently dispatched intelligence assessments to the U.S. National Security Agency in Maryland, whilst United States Air Force RC-135 surveillance aircraft were noted to be using a military base in the Transvaal.³² Although the exchange of information between the two countries was "limited" when it came to matters relating to the Republic's internal security situation, occasional intelligence "swaps" of this nature were made. U.S. agencies provided information on the activities of the ANC in return for data on Cuban troop movements in Angola.³³ Given the importance of the military within the government of P.W. Botha, such contacts were perceived to be an ideal carrot for Constructive Engagement to offer.

Despite this growing cooperation, one incident in 1981, when the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Jeane Kirkpatrick, met four of the Republic's highest-ranking military personnel, proved something of an embarrassment to the Reagan administration. This South African delegation, including General Van der Westhuizen, the head of the Republic's military intelligence, had met Kirkpatrick at the United Nations and then went on to visit the Pentagon and hold talks on Capitol Hill and with members of the National Security Council. When these officials' presence was questioned by journalists, the State Department, at first, denied all knowledge of such meetings. Later, a statement was issued explaining that an "inadvertent omission" had been made in issuing visas to these individuals, due to the fact that the applicants had not identified their rank. The visas were immediately revoked. Kirkpatrick, defending her actions, explained: "The meeting in question was simply a routine application of my general policy of seeing lots of different kinds of people and listening to the opinions of a lot of different kind of people."³⁴ The State Department was left to play down the issue, furious that these South Africans and the executive officials they had met had bypassed the official channels of Constructive Engagement. Washington DC, at least in the eyes of the State Department, was not yet willing to relax the embargo on the Republic's higher-ranking military personnel visiting the United States.³⁵

Constructive Engagement also found scope for positive sanctions within the nuclear field. The supply of U.S. enriched uranium to the Republic had been suspended by the Ford administration in 1975, and then put indefinitely on hold by the Carter administration during 1977. In the wake of evidence that South Africa had developed a nuclear weapons program, Carter had made it clear that there would be no further cooperation in this area until South Africa had signed the U.N. Non-Proliferation Treaty. Pik Botha, during a May 1981 meeting with Secretary of State Al Haig, however, had specifically asked the United States to reconsider this nuclear fuel and technology embargo.³⁶ Constructive Engagement responded with the requested sweeteners.

Within weeks of Pik Botha's enquiry, U.S. uranium brokers, with the State Department's assistance, had arranged a deal whereby French fabricated fuel rods were supplied to South Africa, and in return, a replacement consignment of U.S. uranium was delivered to this company in France.³⁷ Although the U.S. firm involved had not broken any federal law, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 had certainly been violated in spirit. Harry Marshall, the Principal Deputy Assistant at the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, explained the State Department's position on this uranium transfer to a congressional hearing. He stated, "We were not assisting in any way. . . . I would say we did not discourage the transaction . . . we had no jurisdiction to do this. We feel that we can achieve our objectives better—our nonproliferation objectives—with South Africa by not engaging in unnecessary activities which would produce a deteriorating relationship."³⁸

Export licenses for other items of nuclear technology were to follow. The Republic purchased various items of test equipment during this period, a hydrogen recombiner and supplies of Helium-3, for example.³⁹ Constructive Engagement also permitted U.S. corporations to once more provide training and take up servicing contracts for the Republic's commercial reactors.⁴⁰ Malcolm Baldrige, the U.S. secretary of commerce, accounted for these increased levels of sales and services by stating, "this administration has adopted a more flexible policy with respect to approvals of export of dual-use commodities and other material and equipment which have nuclear-related uses in areas such as health and safety activities."⁴¹ Marshall further explained: "We believe that a willingness to consider favorably a small, carefully selected number of nonsensitive exports to South Africa for its nuclear program can help to persuade South Africa to be more forthcoming on non-proliferation issues."⁴²

Constructive Engagement and Human Rights

Constructive Engagement was not a policy designed solely to address the strategic concerns of the United States. Ambassador Nickel observed, "We don't accept the narrow view that tangible interests, like strategic minerals or the Cape Route, can be insulated from our broader interest in political stability of this part of the world. We feel that this stability cannot be based on the *status quo*. It must be based on orderly change—change toward a system that rests on the consent of the governed."⁴³ Even though Constructive Engagement sought to avoid

confrontation with the government in Pretoria, the Reagan administration did not shy away from expressing its opposition to apartheid.

Crocker himself used the familiar language of past administrations. In February 1983, for instance, the assistant secretary was to call apartheid, "morally unacceptable to a democracy such as ours."⁴⁴ Yet, the frequency of this condemnatory rhetoric was dramatically reduced when compared to the Carter years. The administration preferred to express its views in private. On the issue of Bantustans, for example, no high profile public comments were made, but it was clear to the Republic where the United States stood. The United States did not recognize the Ciskei when it was granted its "independence" in 1981, nor did Washington DC choose to offer any of the other homelands recognition.⁴⁵ The State Department refused Chief Lucas Mangope, the President of Bophuthatswana, a visa to visit the United States in June 1981, while two years later, officials of the Ciskei received similar treatment.⁴⁶

The administration's overriding stance, however, was aimed at positive encouragement. Washington DC wanted Pretoria to know that the U.S. could "cooperate with a society undergoing constructive change."⁴⁷ Gone were the Carter administration's vague demands for one person, one vote. Frank Wisner, Crocker's deputy, made the administration's position clear. He saw no point in defining "an exact American-made blueprint for another man's society . . .," but support would be given for any reform that amounted to overall progress.⁴⁸ Praise, in this respect, was issued to Pretoria for the introduction of the new tricameral constitution. Likewise, the administration was to "welcome" the November 1983 "yes" vote in the whites-only referendum backing this new political dispensation. The State Department called this mandate "a milestone in the modern history of South Africa."⁴⁹

If Botha's reform program was to be given time to mature, the Reagan administration realized that it also had to offer Pretoria diplomatic protection. Constructive Engagement duly provided this, staving off punitive sanctions demanded by a majority of the international community. The United States cast four consecutive vetoes in the U.N. Security Council during April 1981, for instance. These acts prevented the imposition of sanctions against South Africa over the question of Namibia.⁵⁰ Likewise, in August of that year, the Western vetoes were once again cast to protect Pretoria. This time, the United Nations proposed punitive measures in the wake of South Africa's military incursions into Angola.⁵¹ Occasionally, Washington DC's steadfast defense of the Republic saw the United States voting in a minority of one. In 1982, for instance, U.S. representatives were alone in opposing a General Assembly resolution calling for the U.N. to continue its work addressing the question of apartheid in sport.⁵² The administration even took its reluctance to confront Pretoria to a point where the United States abstained on a resolution that simply expressed solidarity with women and children who had suffered under apartheid.⁵³

This U.S. diplomatic support was also extended to institutions outside New York. In its first term of office, the Reagan administration was to grant the Republic two new consulates: one in Pittsburgh, and another in Phoenix. The Carter administration had earlier turned down an identical request for this

additional consular representation.⁵⁴ Elsewhere, in Geneva, the U.S. delegation at the International Labor Organization also looked to South African interests. It formally suggested, in 1981, that this body should invite the Republic to rejoin the ILO, this after an absence of 17 years.⁵⁵

The views of Washington DC and Pretoria were also to converge over the issue of Namibia during the Reagan era. Indeed, this long-standing international problem was regarded “the place to start” by Crocker.⁵⁶ Success here could provide a knock-on effect both in the wider southern Africa region and in the Republic itself. In January 1981 therefore, the U.S. Secretary of State Al Haig sent a cable to Foreign Minister Pik Botha stating that the United States would not be “steamrolled on Namibia” by international pressure. Instead, the Reagan administration was looking for a settlement that would address the security interests of the United States region-wide. Al Haig noted: “It is in our interests that the solution we find should not put into jeopardy the interests of those who share our values—above all, our interests in a broad strategic sense.”⁵⁷

Constructive Engagement’s plan was to link the independence of Namibia with the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola.⁵⁸ One would not happen without the other. It was hoped that this “linkage” strategy, by addressing the Republic’s own security interests, would persuade Pretoria to end its occupation of Namibia. It was a negotiating framework that would also serve the wider containment strategy of the United States.

Although the Reagan administration had not abandoned the framework of U.N. resolution 435 completely, as this resolution would be implemented in return for Cuban troop withdrawal, Constructive Engagement had radically altered the foundations on which past negotiations had been based. The administration still held that the Republic’s occupation of Namibia was “illegal,” but Washington DC, by introducing linkage, had effectively removed Pretoria’s obligation to swiftly withdraw from this territory. The United States would now only insist on South Africa’s withdrawal once Cuban troops had been removed from Angola.

South African officials readily agreed to this linkage. According to former U.N. Ambassador Donald McHenry, subsequent to this development, South African diplomats “looked like the cat that had swallowed the canary.” They insisted that linkage was not their idea.⁵⁹ Although U.S. officials continued to state publicly that Cuban troop withdrawal was not a “mechanical precondition” for Namibia’s independence, the State Department acknowledged that these “issues are now linked in the minds of the policy makers.”⁶⁰ Defending this “separate but parallel” linkage strategy in 1983, Crocker argued before the House Africa Subcommittee, “the Cuban issue is not an issue we made up; it is a objective reality at the core of the question of regional security.”⁶¹ Namibia would now have to wait until the end of the decade and the termination of the Cold War for its autonomy. Predicting this outcome, the French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson voiced his opposition to linkage. He believed it inappropriate that “the Namibian People should serve as hostages” to broader U.S. foreign policy goals.⁶²

With what could be perceived as a downgrading of U.S. human rights interests in both the Republic and Namibia, the Reagan administration was vulnerable to

Table 7.1 USAID funding allocations to the Republic of South Africa (US\$ thousands), 1981–1988

Year	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Allocation	40	4,199	9,911	5,763	8,072	20,555	25,000	25,000

Source: U.S. Agency for International Development. *Congressional presentation fiscal year [1983, 1986 and 1989 annual editions] Annex one: Africa*. Washington DC: USAID, c1983, c1986, and c1989; and U.S. Department of State. Special Working Group on South and Southern Africa. *AID in South Africa: making a difference*. Washington DC: Department of State, 1987.

charges that it was only interested in nakedly pursuing strategic and economic interests in this part of the world. Helping to counter this perception and contained within the Constructive Engagement strategy was the sponsorship of a “black empowerment” program. A number of development projects were established by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) targeting the country’s black population. Money was allocated to various educational, entrepreneurial, and labor projects.⁶³ After a modest start, funding for these programs had risen to US\$10 million by 1983 (see table 7.1). In the absence of any formal contacts with recognized antiapartheid groups in South Africa, these programs formed the leading channel of engagement that the Reagan administration opened with the Republic’s black community between January 1981 and July 1984. These projects also represented the most direct manner in which the United States attempted to address the human rights abuses of apartheid.

Economic Contacts under Constructive Engagement

Economic engagement was a central theme in the Reagan administration’s foreign policy toward the Republic of South Africa. Although Chester Crocker himself, in his 1980 *Foreign Affairs* article, had acknowledged the potential ability that comprehensive sanctions had “to wreak major damage” on the South Africa economy, Constructive Engagement had no desire to cause this destruction.⁶⁴ Destabilization of this kind, it was thought, could only damage U.S. interests in the region, and invite Soviet intervention. A more positive approach was envisaged. As Frank Wisner, explained, “Where there is no communication, there is no influence. Where there is no economic intercourse, there is no leverage.”⁶⁵

Like their predecessors, the formulators of Constructive Engagement ardently believed that the expansion of capitalism and the development of a free market would hasten an end to racial discrimination in the Republic. Following this line of reasoning, although official U.S. policy during this period remained to neither encourage nor discourage investment in South Africa, the Reagan administration saw U.S. transnational corporations playing a leading role in the engagement strategy.⁶⁶ The sentiments of the administration, can be gauged by the opinions of its ambassador to Pretoria. Herman Nickel had earlier written an article for *Fortune* entitled “The Case for Doing Business in South Africa.” The ambassador continued this theme whilst in office. Talking to U.S. business representatives in

1983, he made known his “pleasure to be among the representatives of American firms which are constructively, and I hope profitably, engaged in the industrial growth of this country.” He described these TNCs as the “most potent single dynamic for peaceful change” that the Republic had.⁶⁷

Coupled with supporting the right of U.S. corporations to operate in South Africa was the administration’s efforts to persuade these firms that they had a special obligation to the workers they employed. This aspect of Constructive Engagement charged TNCs with the responsibility of undertaking initiatives to improve labor and social conditions for the Republic’s black community. In this respect, the administration urged all the U.S. firms concerned to sign the Sullivan Principles.⁶⁸ Secretary of State George Shultz told a 1984 luncheon of U.S. business chief executives:

Make no mistake about it: your firms have a great deal to do with defining the role and the nature of American influence in South Africa. If U.S. business is seen to favor the status quo in South Africa, that sets powerful forces in motion—forces of immobility in segments of the white community, forces of resentment in the non-white communities—that will contribute to instability and tension. But if U.S. business in South Africa has an image of enlightened commitment to an improved South Africa, to a racial justice and economic betterment for all South Africans, then the effect there and in the U.S. is very positive.

Shultz, opposing the growing domestic U.S. antiapartheid campaign, defended the American corporate record in the Republic. He told his luncheon audience, “I am sure if the record of U.S. business in South Africa were understood . . . , there would be little reason for the rash of divestment bills which has swept state capitals.” The secretary of state urged these executives to maintain and expand their current equal opportunity and welfare programs in the Republic. He underlined, “The plain and simple truth is that we [U.S. business and government] are in South Africa together.”⁶⁹

For the time being, U.S. business in South Africa was willing to cooperate with Constructive Engagement. Despite the decreasing profitability of the South African market, when compared to the halcyon days of the 1960s and early 1970s, this economy remained stable, and U.S. corporate executives still considered the country commercially viable. Most U.S. firms therefore decided to remain active in the South African market and buy into the corporate responsibility agenda. Although executives tended to deny that there was any successful pressure being placed on them by the growing antiapartheid campaign (discussed in more detail in the next chapter), social and welfare programs provided a degree of protection.⁷⁰ In this respect, the number of U.S. firms signing the Sullivan Principles rose from 105 by the end of 1977, to 146 by 1982. Similarly, the funds directed to South African welfare projects increased from US\$3.6 million to US\$22.4 million between 1978 and 1983.⁷¹ U.S. corporations were now financing housing schemes, education and training projects, health programs, crèche facilities, and numerous humanitarian ventures for their black employees and local communities.⁷² Such activities encouraged business leaders to air the argument, in the words of a Ford Motor Company official, and mirroring the

rhetoric of the Reagan administration, that U.S. TNCs “do more for the people of South Africa by staying, and providing equal opportunities” than they would by divesting from this economy.⁷³

Constructive Engagement: An analysis

Constructive Engagement did not succeed in the first half of the 1980s. If Crocker’s approach of friendly persuasion could have ever borne fruit, it needed to exact more of a response from the South African government. Pretoria remained aloof from Washington DC’s advances, with U.S. positive sanctions being welcomed but little given in return. This left U.S. policy dangerously exposed. In particular, the absence of meaningful change in the Republic revealed two flaws in the implementation of Constructive Engagement. The administration had developed precious little contact with the Republic’s black opposition, whilst no adequate constituency of support for its strategy had been built at home. As it will be seen below, these failures, both in South Africa itself and in the United States, left Reagan’s South Africa policy in a precarious position.

Constructive Engagement’s Failure in South Africa

The Reagan administration put considerable faith in South Africa’s National Party government, despite Pretoria itself being skeptical of Constructive Engagement. Although U.S. attempts at building a relationship of cooperation with this government found a degree of support within the Republic’s Department of Foreign Affairs, higher ranking South African officials were always more interested in squeezing what they could from the Reagan administration, rather than working with Crocker.⁷⁴ Indeed, at times, the P.W. Botha government appeared to be actually trying to define the agenda of Constructive Engagement.

In May 1981, for example, Secretary of State Al Haig met with Foreign Minister Pik Botha to outline exactly what Constructive Engagement proposed. Haig’s explanation of U.S. policy was apparently not what the Republic wanted to hear. On his return to South Africa, Botha sent a letter to the administration supposedly recapping the conditions for cooperation that had been discussed. This letter set out a version of the talks “so politically unacceptable” to the United States that it was decided that it would be unwise to acknowledge the foreign minister’s correspondence.⁷⁵

Pretoria also attempted to bypass the official channels of engagement established by the State Department. The March 1981 meeting between South African officials and Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, for instance, saw Pretoria striving to build a relationship with the Reagan administration via its more conservative agencies. Chester Crocker, looking back to this early stage, noted how “Botha and his colleagues preferred to view Ronald Reagan’s 1980 electoral victory as the beginning of an embrace. Dissatisfied with the line coming from official Washington, Botha dispatched senior military emissaries to go round the diplomatic channel and obtain another definition of U.S. policy.”⁷⁶

Although Crocker recounts how the South African government became more receptive to using official channels during 1982 and 1983, Pretoria never ceased its lobbying of the conservative agencies of the U.S. government. The Defense Department, the CIA, and the National Security Agency, in particular, were targets of Pretoria's parallel diplomacy. South African officials were offering a "tacit trade-off," whereby regional cooperation would be given in return for the United States playing down apartheid.⁷⁷ Meetings between the administration and South African representatives, emphasizing this strategic agenda, were a regular feature during the first term of Ronald Reagan's presidency.⁷⁸

Diplomacy between the State Department and South Africa within the Republic itself was also strained. Herman Nickel described the National Party leadership to be rigidly "xenophobic" on their own turf. The ambassador recounted the lecture he received from Prime Minister P.W. Botha on the occasion of their first meeting. Botha warned Nickel about the United States attempting to "meddle" in the Republic's affairs. Indeed, Nickel described this dialogue as always being "rough."⁷⁹ Contained within the memoirs of Donald Sole, Nickel's counterpart, is a telling comment on this situation. Sole wrote, "In retrospect, I am convinced that with somewhat more finesse and imagination on our part, Constructive Engagement could have been made to work to the advantage of both South Africa and the United States. But because we ourselves had not sown the seed, we failed to nurture this tender plant and in the crucial first two years of its existence, it was unable to root itself sufficiently firmly . . ."⁸⁰

Given Pretoria's limited response to Constructive Engagement's overtures, the Reagan administration's continued provision of sweeteners must be judged inappropriate. In this respect, the positive sanctions offered by Washington DC were too imprecise. When it was apparent that Pretoria's level of cooperation would potentially be inadequate, the diplomatic carrots should have become linked to specific reforms. Without this precision, Constructive Engagement had handed the South African government the "blank check" Crocker had himself warned against prior to joining the administration.⁸¹ Pretoria gratefully received the positive sanctions, without feeling compelled to respond in kind.

In 1980, Crocker specified conditions that needed to be abided by if the United States was to back the Republic's reform from above. He stated, "Piecemeal power-sharing steps deserve support if they are (a) consistent with the goal of expanded black political advancements, (b) demonstrably agreed to by the participants in them, and (c) not inconsistent with an open process of change."⁸² It is questionable if P.W. Botha's reforms met any of these conditions.

The tone of the National Party's reform agenda had been set right at the start. Prime Minister Botha declared, "One man, one vote is out; that is to say, never."⁸³ The changes that followed were not merely cosmetic, as fundamental steps were taken to modernize apartheid. It was soon clear, however, that South Africa's future, as envisaged by the National Party, would continue to be based on the principles of racial categorization and separation. As the *Economist* had commented at the time, "No government which has recently introduced a racially classified parliament, separate local government and a segregated welfare state can seriously expect the world to believe it is intent on dismantling

apartheid.”⁸⁴ The Republic’s government clearly had its own reform agenda that did not include the principle of the “consent of the governed.”

In the absence of fundamental reform, the Reagan administration was left, in the spirit of friendly persuasion, to make optimistic noises about the scraps of progress that the Republic did produce. An almost myopic backing of engagement, for instance, left Washington DC with something of a paradox in 1983. It was faced with a difficult decision over how to react to South Africa’s new constitution. Given that this political dispensation represented the most comprehensive reform Pretoria had produced, Assistant Secretary Crocker thought it would be “irresponsible to say nothing.”⁸⁵ Yet the tone of “welcome” that the administration gave this initiative, one that continued to exclude 80 percent of the Republic’s population, could not be justified. Crocker himself later conceded this particular statement “left a taste it did not mean to leave.”⁸⁶ But what choice did U.S. officials have? The strategy of Constructive Engagement dictated that encouragement should be given, especially as the Reagan administration had very little else to praise concerning Pretoria’s behavior.

Chester Crocker’s second 1980 precondition that the United States required Pretoria’s initiatives to be “demonstrably agreed to by all the participants in them” was clearly not followed. It was the black community’s rejection of the 1984 constitution that precipitated the largest challenge to the National Party’s minority rule that South Africa had ever seen. The boycott mounted by coloreds and Indians of the tricameral elections and the African community’s nonparticipation in township council polls showed the level of black anger over the limited nature of the Botha reforms. These were the reforms that Constructive Engagement was supporting. The Reagan administration simply underestimated the level of opposition that the new constitution would generate, and the United States paid a price for this. Chief Buthelezi, regarded in Washington DC as a moderate black leader and an ally, summed up the feelings of many when he stated the U.S. support for the 1984 constitution “was a slap in the face for black South Africa.”⁸⁷

Indeed, it was not surprising that the Reagan executive was out of touch with grass roots opinion in South Africa. Compared to the lengths the administration went to in building a relationship with the South African government, Washington DC’s contacts with the Republic’s black community were minimal. This imbalance in dialogue was evident right from the beginning. When Chester Crocker visited Cape Town in April 1981, he chose only to meet officially with government representatives and not with black leaders.⁸⁸ Indeed, the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs was only formally to meet 15 black South Africans between January 1982 and December 1984.⁸⁹ Crocker was a regular commuter to southern Africa, yet the Reagan administration chose not to use this opportunity to directly engage the black opposition. There was certainly no effort to recreate an “Andy Young-style” of networking with all sections of the community.

Herman Nickel’s public profile in the Republic also gave the impression that the United States was more interested in establishing a dialogue with the minority government. The ambassador met black representatives more often than Crocker,

but no meaningful or consistent relationship developed between the embassy and this community.⁹⁰ As Robert Cabelly, Crocker's assistant, later explained, "for the first four years our policy was focused on trying to do business on a number of internal and regional issues with South Africa. That caused us to burn some bridges with the blacks. It didn't shut down the dialogue, as some would say, but it did not promote a dialogue."⁹¹ One instance of this burning of bridges was Ambassador Nickel's decision to remove a number of UDF members from a list of candidates selected for a U.S. Information Service exchange program. This was done specifically at the request of the South African government. Nickel judged it more important to avoid antagonizing his host government than it was to further contacts with the Republic's black leadership.⁹² The administration was thus remarkably remiss in its declared objective of making the United States "a credible partner [on] both sides of the lines."⁹³

This limited contact with the black population was a mistake. If Constructive Engagement demanded that Washington DC become more involved with talking to the Republic's government, parallel discussions were needed with the opposition to explain this position, and to counter charges that the Reagan administration had tilted its policy toward the interests of the white minority. In November 1982, Inkatha's Gibson Thula expressed just these misgivings. He commented, "We are greatly perturbed by the Reagan administration's friendly attitude toward South Africa. We have some suspicions that this friendly attitude is being carried out at the expense of the voteless people in South Africa." Bishop Desmond Tutu was even more skeptical. Asked by journalists if he thought Constructive Engagement was becoming more conservative, he replied, "I frankly don't care . . . I have written off the Americans as a government."⁹⁴

The Reagan administration's neglect of its relationship with the Republic's black community was most obvious in its dealings with the African National Congress. Even though the ANC remained the primary candidate to form South Africa's first post-apartheid government, contacts were scarce. In accordance with the administration's decision to avoid "unilaterally isolating ourselves from those with whom we had differences," communication had not been completely severed.⁹⁵ As Frank Wisner told a congressional hearing, the administration did not "deny or back away from the ANC." It considered this organization as "one of the many forces, many black South African forces in being, and ANC members, leaders, see Americans and on occasion American officials. There is no access denied."⁹⁶ Yet, contacts between the U.S. government and the ANC were not regular, and certainly did not involve higher-ranking members of the Reagan administration.⁹⁷ During the Carter presidency, the United States had fostered an "easy-going relationship" with this organization, especially through the U.S. mission to the United Nations. This style of relationship, however, did not continue with the arrival of the Reagan administration. Toward the end of 1981, for instance, the ANC had requested a meeting with Ambassador Kirkpatrick. The letter was not acknowledged.⁹⁸

Looking back, Chester Crocker explained this lack of contact with the African National Congress as being a matter of priorities. He commented that there was "no particular reason" for such a dialogue to be continued while this issue was on

the “back-burner”: “You don’t go out of your way to clutter up your calendar.” Only when the township uprisings commenced did Crocker think there was a “context” in which the decision to “raise the level” of communication was appropriate.⁹⁹ Mid-level U.S. contacts with the ANC resumed in 1985. This overdue decision was symptomatic of the administration’s overall approach toward apartheid. Effectively, the Reagan administration had tied its South Africa policy to the fate of the National Party’s reform program. When this program collapsed under the weight of black protest in the mid-1980s, Washington DC had no room left to maneuver.

Constructive Engagement’s Domestic Failure

Assistant Secretary of State Crocker told a Kansas conference in June 1981 that if Constructive Engagement was to succeed the “American people” had to “understand” its goals.¹⁰⁰ This was another area in which policy objectives were not realized. Constructive Engagement, in all its complexity, was never sufficiently explained to the U.S. political establishment. Unfamiliarity, combined with a lack of obvious success in its first three years, left the administration’s policy an easy target for the antiapartheid movement. The executive’s, and in particular the State Department’s, self-determined isolation when it came to managing this policy contributed considerably to this domestic failure.

Despite wishing to be an “open” policy, the diplomacy of Constructive Engagement was purposefully kept out of the public gaze.¹⁰¹ Crocker readily acknowledged that he was pursuing “private rather than public communication” with the South African government. As he put it, “More is going on in this region than meets the eye.”¹⁰² President Reagan’s national security advisor, William Clark, expressed this approach in more flamboyant terms. He declared the administration’s strategy toward Pretoria reflected “our California upbringing not to criticize friends and relatives in public, but to work it out in private.”¹⁰³ Realistically, this secretive approach was only going to be viable if it precipitated quick results.

When rapid change was not forthcoming, memories of the failure of NSSM39 resurfaced. The accusation was that Constructive Engagement was only serving the status quo in South Africa, and these were charges that the Reagan administration had difficulty countering. The quiet nature of the diplomacy conducted provided little protection for the policy overall.¹⁰⁴ Even when the intensity of domestic disapproval forced the administration to look more to its public relations (discussed below), officials could only reiterate their policy’s intentions, and express a belief that quiet diplomacy was the best way forward.¹⁰⁵ Earlier, Ambassador Herman Nickel had warned, “our ability to continue on our present course will surely depend on tangible evidence that we have been making progress towards our goal.”¹⁰⁶ Constructive Engagement was never able to supply such evidence.

This failure of the Reagan administration to build a constituency of support for its South Africa policy was most apparent in relations between the executive and legislative branches on this issue. Specifically, a rift developed between the

administration and the House of Representatives. Repeatedly, between 1981 and 1984, exercising their constitutional oversight duties, relevant House subcommittees would ask the administration for tangible evidence to justify its continued friendly relations with Pretoria.¹⁰⁷ The executive consistently failed to provide answers that satisfied their questioners. In 1981, for example, Princeton Lyman, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, was asked for just “one concrete positive result we have achieved toward the attainment of [Constructive Engagement’s] objectives.” Lyman referred to the Namibian negotiations but was “hesitant to point to specific results . . .”¹⁰⁸ This stonewalling by the Reagan administration was a familiar feature in the 1981 to 1984 period. Stephen Solarz, during another congressional hearing, finally gave up his questioning in frustration, commenting, “Let me say that my dentist goes further trying to extract teeth without Novocain than I am apparently able to do in getting you an answer to what I consider is a very simple question. I think the record will have to stand that the Secretary [Crocker] is unwilling to describe in specific terms what progress has been made.”¹⁰⁹ As Ambassador Donald Sole later observed of this period, Washington DC was in a difficult position, as Pretoria made no effort to provide the administration with a prize that it could hold up as vindication of Constructive Engagement.¹¹⁰

By the mid-1980s a consensus had developed outside the Reagan administration that considered Constructive Engagement a failure. Pressure was mounting for a new U.S. strategy toward South Africa. Crocker’s response to this pressure was to relaunch Constructive Engagement, this time putting more emphasis on the public relations needs of this policy. As Nickel put it, “as anyone in public life knows, perceptions of policy can be as important as the reality—indeed, perceptions can themselves become political realities.”¹¹¹

This relaunch, however, involved no substantive policy changes. Crocker continued to dismiss proposed congressional punitive sanctions as a “cop out.”¹¹² The United States would remain engaged with South Africa in order to work for peaceful change. “Despite the inherent difficulties,” Crocker reiterated, “the administration sees no reason to shift course and every reason to persevere.”¹¹³ Instead, the assistant secretary’s relaunch was about making it clear publicly that Constructive Engagement opposed the status quo in the Republic. Higher-ranking officials within the executive were drafted in to help with this offensive.

At the core of this relaunch was the San Francisco address of Lawrence Eagleburger, the Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs. The State Department billed this address as “a corrective for misapprehensions about what our policy really is.”¹¹⁴ Talking before a National Conference of Editorial Writers, Eagleburger stressed that the administration thought apartheid to be “morally wrong.” Likewise, the undersecretary demanded a future where “all South Africans must have a say in determining their political system.” It was made clear that the Reagan administration, “reject[s] unequivocally attempts to denationalize the black South African majority and relegate them to citizenship in the separate homelands,” neither would Constructive Engagement “countenance

repression of organizations and individuals by means of administrative measures like banning and detention without due process of law.”¹¹⁵ Indeed, Eagleburger’s words were the types of public statement familiar in the Carter years, but that had been largely absent during the initial period of Constructive Engagement.

Yet, Eagleburger’s speech appeased few critics. By now the clamor was for the United States to “do something” about South Africa. Time had run out on the opportunity for quiet diplomacy, and longer-term strategies of persuasion and influence. Positive sanctions would be replaced by punitive measures. As it will be shown in the next chapter, the township uprisings of the mid-1980s removed any final chance that Crocker’s relaunch could win the day. Instead, Constructive Engagement would be overwhelmed by both international and domestic events. Views similar to those of Olara Otunnu prevailed. The Ugandan ambassador to the United Nations had pleaded at a 1982 conference attended by Chester Crocker, “since the carrot has not worked, won’t you please try the stick?”¹¹⁶

CHAPTER 8

“THERE ARE OCCASIONS WHEN QUIET DIPLOMACY IS NOT ENOUGH”: THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION, 1984–1986

Through a series of township uprisings that commenced in August 1984, black South Africans mounted a massive challenge to white minority rule in their country. Not since the Boer War had there been such sustained violence in this part of the world. The cost was high. During the unrest, which continued into 1987, almost three thousand South Africans were to lose their lives, while thirty thousand others were detained by the Republic's security forces.¹ The era of quiet diplomacy was at an end.

The current chapter will highlight the response of the United States to this violence. Initially, the Reagan administration attempted to adapt its policy of Constructive Engagement. The core of this approach remained intact, but an emphasis was now placed on a public explanation of this strategy. However, when this repackaging of Constructive Engagement failed to appease a clamor amongst elite U.S. opinion to “do something” about South Africa, the administration was forced to make significant concessions. In September 1985, President Reagan signed an executive order imposing limited economic sanctions against Pretoria. Yet, federal legislators thought this cautious response inadequate. Consequently, South Africa climbed the political agenda in Washington DC, and a full-scale policy debate ensued. The outcome was the U.S. Congress taking matters into its own hands, overriding a presidential veto, and voting the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (CAAA) into law during October 1986. Against the Reagan administration's advice, the United States had, for the first time, imposed a broad range of economic sanctions against apartheid South Africa.

Structurally, the chapter is divided into three parts. The first of these highlights the key pressures converging on U.S. decision makers at this time. Events in the Republic are examined, alongside the campaign waged by the U.S. anti-apartheid movement, and the political response from the U.S. Congress. The chapter's second section then explores how the Reagan administration amended its South Africa policy in light of these mounting pressures. The constants carried

over from the earlier 1980s are identified, and the policy adaptations assessed. The third and final section analyzes the mid-1980s battle between Capitol Hill and the executive over the control of U.S. foreign policy toward South Africa. Events leading to the signing of the 1985 executive order are explored, as is the political maneuvering that finally resulted in the passage of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986. Effectively, growing external pressures, domestic political demands, and fissures that developed within the administration itself led to the U.S. Congress unilaterally terminating Constructive Engagement.

Converging Pressures on U.S. Policy Makers

The shifting nature of events and pressures influencing decision makers in Washington DC during the mid-1980s can be grouped into three spheres: the South African context, forces emanating from the U.S. domestic antiapartheid movement, and the actions of the U.S. Congress. Each of these influences is examined in turn.

The South African Context

The township uprisings originated in the Vaal Triangle in response to tax and rent increases at a time of economic recession. They were also a reaction to the National Party's imposed political dispensation. On the inaugural day of the new constitution, 14 people were to die in clashes with the South African Police (SAP), while a further 29 protestors were shot dead the following day in Sharpeville, Evaton, and Sebokeng.² Although sporadic at first, over the next 32 months, the unrest was to spread to townships right across South Africa, and many more demonstrators were to lose their lives.

The sustained nature of these uprisings provided a clear message that the majority in South Africa were not prepared to accept the political settlement pressed on them by the National Party government. Many activists risked their lives to prove this. The popular support given to the United Democratic Front's campaign against the 1984 constitution was impressive, and, as a consequence, black South Africans had now forced their views on to the international agenda. However much Chester Crocker and his colleagues still favored the concept of reform from above, it would now be impossible for Washington DC to back the National Party's reform program in isolation. Now, the opinion of black South Africa had also to be taken into account.

In response to the uprisings, the South African government itself exercised an off-the-cuff mixture of reform and repression. At first, between August 1984 and June 1986, Pretoria, in an effort to preserve its reformist credentials, attempted to contain, rather than simply outlaw, the United Democratic Front (UDF). This organization was to be neutralized. Within weeks of the start of the unrest, the South Africa Defence Force (SADF) was deployed in the townships, alongside the South Africa Police. The combined firepower of these security forces was evident in the growing death toll amongst township residents. Most alarmingly, in one March 1985 incident, 17 unarmed individuals were gunned down by the

SAP outside Uitenhage. Police officers had opened fire upon a crowd of mourners attending a funeral of previous victims of the unrest.³

In July 1985, when Pretoria fully realized the sustained nature of the unrest it faced, a state of emergency was declared in 36 magisterial districts of the Vaal Triangle and the Eastern Cape. The emergency was extended three months later to include the Western Cape. This legislation, designed to hinder the activities of the black opposition, was comprehensive. Louis Le Grange, the Minister of Law and Order was to ban “all gatherings held where any government or any principle or any policy principle, or any actions of the government, or any statement, or the application or implementation of any act is approved, defended, attacked, criticized or discussed, or which is in protest against or support or in memoria of anything.”⁴ Media reporting restrictions and the systematic detention of 5,349 leading activists completed this crackdown.⁵

Yet, the South Africa government’s response to the unrest was not just one of simple oppression. The government believed that reform still had to be offered. An effort was therefore made to co-opt a black middle class by offering material improvement and constitutional adjustments. The repeal of the Prohibition of Political Interference Act, allowed, but did not compel, political parties in the Republic to recruit their membership on a nonracial basis, while in the country’s mines, blacks for the first time were allowed to handle explosives. Likewise, the state’s rail system was also partially desegregated in 1985. It was to be the repeal of the Immorality and Mixed Marriages acts, however, permitting sexual and marital relations across race divisions that proved to be the most symbolic of these reforms. The Botha government even muted the possibility of future talks with “moderate” opposition groups, addressing issues of black representation.⁶ Indeed, in March 1986, the state of emergency was lifted in an effort to give the appearance of normal politics resuming.

However, there was little ambiguity in the signals reaching Washington DC after June 1986. The South African government, responding to a renewed wave of unrest unleashed by the lifting of the original emergency provisions, was to declare a second state of emergency, this time nationwide in its jurisdiction. No longer would the government’s response to the uprisings be based on an improvised mixture of stop-start reform underwritten by repression. The previous crisis management approach, largely administered by the South Africa Police and the Ministry of Cooperation and Constitutional Development, made way for a longer-term strategy of counterrevolution overseen by the South African military. Whereas, in the earlier years of the 1980s, the government believed that there could be no security without reform, the new state of emergency worked on the premise that there could now be no reform without security.⁷ The death toll of township residents consequently rose (see table 8.1).⁸

Pressure Emanating from the U.S. Antiapartheid Movement

Events in the Republic made their mark in the United States. Apartheid climbed the U.S. political agenda, gaining a position of attention that it had never occupied before. Indeed, pressures imported from South Africa reinvigorated the U.S.

Table 8.1 Political violence, detentions, and strikes in South Africa, 1982–1988

<i>Year</i>	<i>Unrest fatalities</i>	<i>Political detentions</i>	<i>Number of strikes</i>
1982	—	293	394
1983	—	418	336
1984	149	4,389	469
1985	824	8,387	389
1986	1,298	21,150	793
1987	661	15,902	1,148
1988	237	4,678	1,025

Source: South African Institute of Race Relations. *Race relations survey [annual editions 1985 to 1988/1989]*. Johannesburg: SAIRR, 1986, 1987, 1988, and 1989; and Detention without trial. *SA Barometer*. 1989, 3(2), 24–25.

domestic antiapartheid campaign, and prompted further congressional activism. The overall effect was a telling shift in U.S. elite opinion.

TransAfrica's Randall Robinson was of the view that "Americans have the impression something doesn't exist unless it's on television."⁹ Most news programs contained an item on South Africa during the mid-1980s. The U.S. public regularly viewed images of mass funerals, overturned cars aflame, stone-throwing youths, police attacking demonstrators, and armored cars rolling through the black townships. The horror of the uprisings was broadcast into the living rooms of American families on a daily basis.

Yet, despite this increased coverage of events in South Africa, general public opinion concerning apartheid remained uninterested. Poll evidence showed U.S. citizens to be adamantly opposed to the principle of apartheid, but few of these respondents seemed to be knowledgeable about what was actually occurring in the Republic, or how their own government was responding to these events. A CBS poll of September 1985, for instance, found that only 3 percent of its sample approved of apartheid, but 58 percent had chosen not to reply to questioning on the basis that they knew too little to offer an opinion. Similarly, on the subject of the Reagan administration's handling of South Africa, this poll registered a 21 percent disapproval rate, against 17 percent who approved. The remaining 62 percent, again, declined to answer due to a lack of knowledge.¹⁰ U.S. public opinion did not change dramatically even after the "Free South Africa" movement had launched a series of demonstrations outside the Republic's embassy in Washington DC.¹¹ The regular arrests of high-profile politicians and celebrities at this location made only a moderate impact on general public opinion.¹²

Yet, what did change was elite opinion. Considering the lack of any sizable informed constituency on South African issues, the U.S. antiapartheid movement was remarkably successful in influencing the policy debate during the mid-1980s. Local divestment campaigns, and the work of U.S. Representative Howard Wolpe had kept the South African issue alive "for the really converted" in the earlier 1980s, but the external input of the township uprisings now drew more people and increased funding into the domestic antiapartheid campaign.¹³ South Africa became a topic of discussion amongst the political chattering classes,

especially within the Washington DC Beltway. As Steven Metz, in his study of the antiapartheid movement, reasoned, “while an interest group can keep an issue on the political agenda, it cannot, in itself, change a policy that has become institutionalized without some concomitant change in external conditions that are beyond the control of the group.”¹⁴ The uprisings provided this impetus.

As well as being able to secure greater resources, the U.S. antiapartheid movement now also found it easier to outflank its opponents in debate. Having sustained the same line of argument for 25 years (the need to impose economic punitive sanctions to force change and prevent further violence), antiapartheid groups were now in a position to reap the rewards of their persistence. Conversely, proponents of Constructive Engagement were in the unenviable position of stressing the need for restraint against Pretoria, despite the violence. The administration’s arguments for nurturing a complex strategy of continued contacts with a state so obviously abusing human rights were difficult to explain within a system versed in the rhetoric of Lincoln and Jefferson. As Senator Mitch McConnell observed in 1985: “The apartheid issue made civil rights black and white again. It was not complicated.”¹⁵ Economic sanctions would meet the demand for the United States to do something. Engagement offered no such definitive outcome.

One of the most obvious manifestations of this increased support for the antiapartheid movement could be found in the growing success of its local divestment campaigns. State and city governments responded to campaigning by passing their own legislation on South Africa. What Washington DC failed to provide at the federal level, the localities enacted themselves. By 1986, 15 states had divested their public funds of investments associated with the Republic. A similar pattern could also be observed in the number of municipal governments legislating on this issue (see table 8.2).

Table 8.2 U.S. state and city governments, and colleges and universities divesting their funds of South Africa associated investments, 1977–1988

Year	State governments	City governments	Colleges and universities
1977	—	—	3
1978	—	—	12
1979	—	—	11
1980	—	1	6
1981	—	2	5
1982	2	—	4
1983	1	1	4
1984	2	2	5
1985	8	5	52
1986	2	37	42
1987	5	16	3
1988	1	3	5

Source: Richard Knight, *Briefing paper: state and municipal governments take aim at apartheid*. New York: American Committee on Africa, 1991. 3 and 4; and Africa Fund, *Divestment action on South Africa by US and Canadian colleges and universities*. New York: Africa Fund, 1988.

Pressure was also maintained on U.S. transnational corporations operating in South Africa. Shareholder resolutions multiplied, publicizing the links between these businesses and the Republic. The Interfaith Centre on Corporate Responsibility was able to confirm by 1987 that every major U.S. company operating in the Republic had now had a shareholder resolution filed against it.¹⁶ Many larger TNCs had to cope with specific campaigns run against them. The NAACP and AFL-CIO, for instance, called upon the American people to boycott Shell gas stations because of this company's dealings with the SADF.¹⁷ The "hassle factor" combined with the township violence and a lack of a political response from the National Party helped sway the opinion of many U.S. businesses at this time. Thoughts moved to disinvestment from South Africa.

Also helping any corporate decisions to withdraw was the generally moribund condition of the Republic's economy. By July 1985, diminishing international confidence had resulted in a significant balance of payments problem. In this month, Pretoria found itself with a large proportion of the country's short-term debt simultaneously due for repayment. It was at this point that foreign creditors concluded that the South African economy could no longer sustain its existing levels of borrowing.¹⁸ Chase Manhattan was the first bank to refuse to roll over its share of the US\$4 billion debt, and a foreign exchange crisis ensued.¹⁹ With other U.S. banks following suit, there was, in the words of the *Star*, a "bloodbath" of selling on the Johannesburg stock market, which in turn caused the Rand to go into free fall. During August 1985 alone, R11 billion was wiped off the value of the Johannesburg stock exchange.²⁰

An exodus of U.S. business from the Republic followed. A steady flow of departures during the second half of this year took the total number of U.S. corporate withdrawals from South Africa to 36 in 1985, a five-fold increase on the previous 12 months. Amongst those cutting their exposure or leaving entirely were such high profile names as Pepsico, Pan Am, Motorola, and Apple Computer. Further disinvestments were to occur in 1986, including Citicorp, ITT, Xerox, and Ford (see table 8.3). The decision of these companies to leave resulted largely as a consequence of the passage of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (discussed below). By the end of the disinvestment process in 1992, U.S. direct investment in the Republic amounted to just US\$900 million, having fallen from the US\$2.6 billion that had been invested in this market prior to the township uprisings.²¹

Table 8.3 U.S. transnational corporations disinvesting from the South African market, 1984–1988

Year	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Disinvestments	8	36	53	56	26

Source: Cathy Bowers and Alison Cooper, *U.S. and Canadian investment in South Africa*. Washington DC: IRRS, 1986; and Alison Cooper, *U.S. business in South Africa 1992*. Washington DC: IRRS, 1992.

The U.S. Congress and Legislative Action

Prior to 1985, the U.S. Congress had chosen to encroach only at the fringes of the executive's policy toward the Republic. In September 1983, a warning shot had been put across the Reagan administration's bows when the House of Representatives attached the Gramm Amendment to the International Monetary Fund authorization bill of that year. This legislation instructed U.S. officials to vote against IMF applications from countries that practised apartheid.²² Overall, however, the majority of U.S. legislators were content to give the administration and its policy of Constructive Engagement time and space to work.²³

This situation was to change dramatically after August 1984. No longer would congressional interest in South Africa be confined to a small number of liberal Democratic members, largely operating campaigning through the House Subcommittee on Africa, and the Congressional Black Caucus. With violence in South Africa being reported daily in the U.S. media, apartheid began to progress up the legislative agenda of both political parties.

In September 1985, Senator Edward Kennedy laid down a direct challenge to his congressional opponents. He contended, "The Republican Party is at a crossroads. It must decide if it wants to be the party of Lincoln or apartheid."²⁴ Although this challenge was made largely for political effect, it was not wholly misplaced. The nature of the South African situation in the mid-1980s was forcing many Republicans to make tough decisions on where exactly they stood within this debate. Although those on the right of the party stood their ground throughout the 1980s, their global reasoning looked increasingly out of place. Pronouncements on the strategic importance of the Cape sea route and the Republic's minerals failed to counterbalance outrage generated by pictures broadcast of the township violence. As a result, the actions of more moderate Republicans came to determine the nature of the U.S. policy toward South Africa.

Fissures began to appear within the Republican Party. One group of congressional Republicans, the Conservative Opportunity Society, had particular difficulty in continuing to support Constructive Engagement. These legislators felt the level of contact the executive encouraged with the South African government to be inappropriate. As Vin Weber explained to the *New York Times*: "We younger conservatives grew up in the '60s with a clear impression of national consensus favoring racial justice . . . Majoritarian Republicans do not want to be burdened with the legacy of racial bigotry."²⁵

Responding to the loss of life in the townships during the fall of 1984, a group of 35 Republican members of Congress sent a letter to the South African ambassador in Washington DC. Explaining the motives behind this move, Robert Walker, who organized the correspondence, stated, "The letter grew out of discussions among several [legislators] over several months. I found myself increasingly anxious to publicly express opposition to apartheid, and as I discussed it with my closest colleagues, I found that they too felt the time had come to have conservatives voice their repugnance . . ."²⁶ This letter warned the South African government that "if 'constructive engagement' becomes in your view an excuse

for maintaining the unacceptable status quo," the U.S. Congress would be forced to take punitive action.²⁷ On signing this letter, Walker explained to the press that Ambassador Fourie "needed to understand that South Africa could no longer count on conservatives to sit idly by."²⁸

With this letter, Walker and his colleagues had created a "conscious confrontation" between the congressional Republican Party and the Reagan administration.²⁹ This confrontation was to play itself out in the following months with a series of acts being passed contradicting the executive's desired policy. These items of legislation were only successful due to considerable support provided from within the Republican Party.

In 1985, consensus emerged within the House of Representatives to impose sanctions on South Africa involving an embargo on the importation of Krugerrands, the making of the Sullivan Principles mandatory for U.S. companies employing more than 25 people in the Republic, and the termination of all computer sales to the South African security forces and other government agencies.³⁰ Clauses contained within this bill allowed the president to lift these sanctions if South African reforms met certain criteria, such as the lifting of the state of emergency. An amendment was added later to this bill banning the transfer of nuclear technology between the United States and South Africa.³¹

A similar bill also made headway in the Senate. However, just five hours before the upper house was to make its decision, Ronald Reagan, invoking the International Emergency Powers Act, signed Executive Order 12532.³² The president in his accompanying message to Congress stated, "I want to work with the Congress to achieve bipartisan support for America's policy toward South Africa. That is why I have put forward this executive order today."³³ The Order, in more realistic terms, was an attempt to water down the congressional legislation, whilst keeping South Africa policy within its traditional jurisdiction of the executive (see table 8.4).

For the time being, President Reagan's intervention was deemed satisfactory by a majority in Congress. Something had, indeed, now "been done." Consequently, the original legislation was not pursued. Those members of Congress who felt they had been short changed, if not exactly defeated, by the executive order, had to make do with amendments to the Export Administration Act of 1985 that reimposed the Carter administration's total ban on U.S. exports to the South African security forces.³⁴

The matter, however, was not settled in the longer term. Renewed violence in the townships prevented this. The U.S. Congress was flooded with South Africa-related legislation during 1986. Emerging from the House was HR4868 sponsored by Representative William Gray. Gray once more introduced the ideas of ending all new U.S. investment in South Africa, and the making of the Sullivan Principles mandatory for U.S. firms remaining in this market. This bill, however, spurred on by the violence in South Africa, also proposed that the United States should place an embargo on the Republic's coal, uranium, iron, and steel exports. Again, the president could lift these sanctions if the South African government introduced specified political freedoms.³⁵ Once HR4868 reached the floor of the House, and with the House Republican leadership

Table 8.4 U.S. punitive sanctions imposed by Executive Order 12532 of 1985 and the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986

<i>Executive Order 12532 of 1985</i>	<i>CAAA of 1986</i>
• A ban on new loans to South Africa (except those assisting educational, housing, or health activity provided on a nonracial basis) • A ban on the sale of computer hardware and software to apartheid implementing offices of the South African government • A ban on the transfer of nuclear goods and technology to South Africa (except safety equipment) • A ban on the importation of military equipment from South Africa • The termination of U.S. trade assistance to companies not implementing the Sullivan Principles • The prohibition of Krugerrand sales in the United States, subject to GATT consultation (the actual prohibition of these coins was later authorized via Executive Order 12535 of 1 October 1985)	• A ban on new loans to South Africa (except those assisting educational, housing, or health activity provided on a nonracial basis) • A ban on the sale of computer hardware and software to apartheid implementing offices of the South African government • A ban on the transfer of nuclear goods and technology to South Africa (except safety equipment) • A ban on the importation of military equipment from South Africa • The termination of U.S. trade assistance to companies not implementing the Sullivan Principles • The prohibition of Krugerrand importation from South Africa • A ban on the importation of goods from South African parastatals (except designated strategic materials and agricultural products) • The termination of air transportation between the United States and South Africa (except for emergency landings) • A prohibition on U.S. banks holding deposits for the South African government or its parastatals • A ban on the importation of uranium ore, uranium oxide, iron, steel coal, sugar, and textiles from South Africa • The prohibition of new investment in South Africa (with the exception of black owned businesses) • The termination of the 1946 treaty preventing companies paying double taxation on profits generated in South Africa • A ban on U.S. government agencies contracting with South African parastatals (except for diplomatic and consular services) • A ban on U.S. public funds being used to promote tourism or to subsidize trade in South Africa • A ban on the export of items on the munitions list (unless for commercial purposes, and when these items will not be used by the Republic's security services) • A ban on the export of oil and petroleum products to South Africa • The prohibition of cooperation between the armed forces of the two governments (except for the purposes of intelligence gathering)

Source: Executive Order 12532, *Prohibiting trade and certain other transactions involving South Africa*, 9 September 1985. <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/12532.html> [Accessed: 1 January 2008]; Executive Order 12535, *Prohibition of the Importation of the South African Krugerrand*, 1 October 1985. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=37829> [Accessed: 1 January 2008]; and Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-440).

apparently absent from the chamber, Ronald Dellums was to push through, on a voice vote, amendments that would have required the complete disinvestment of U.S. corporations from South Africa, and an imposition of a total embargo on trade with this country.³⁶ Gray accredited the House's radical stance to the fact that Representatives had "looked at the carnage, the violation of human rights that occurred in the last few days and said, 'That's it.'"³⁷

Although the Senate was to reject the House's total economic embargo, it did choose to enact Grey's original measures. The upper chamber also added an amendment of its own placing a ban on South African agricultural produce (see table 8.4). Senator Jesse Helms agreed to drop his obstruction of this bill in return for the inclusion of a clause encouraging the ANC to suspend its "terrorist activities," and for it to "reexamine" its ties with the South African Communist Party.³⁸ Provoked on by the news that Pretoria had declared a second state of emergency, and reacting to Ronald Reagan's disastrous keynote speech on this subject (discussed below), the Senate was to approve the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act by 84 votes to 14 during August 1986.³⁹ A month later, the House of Representatives accepted the Senate bill in its entirety, and the legislation was dispatched to the White House for presidential action.⁴⁰

President Reagan was to veto this bill. Yet, hints from the White House that it was about to impose a second executive order relating to South Africa were not enough to subdue the Congress this time.⁴¹ The House was to override the president's veto by 313 votes to 83, while the Senate voted by 78 to 21 to do likewise. The Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act was to pass into public law at the beginning of October 1986.⁴² Not since 1973 and the War Powers Act had the U.S. Congress overturned a presidential veto on a foreign policy matter, and the chief executive been rebuffed so completely in this domain. It was a measure of how much the issue of South Africa had encroached into the U.S. domestic political arena.

Adapting Constructive Engagement

Rapidly changing events in the Republic forced the Reagan administration to sharpen its foreign policy toward South Africa after August 1984. The more aggressive "active Constructive Engagement" that emerged amidst the township violence sought to weld together old constants together whilst introducing a new style of rhetoric to make sure the South African government and the U.S. audience at home understood exactly the terms under which the Reagan administration was prepared to engage.

A New Rhetoric

In June 1985, Kenneth Dam, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, told a congressional hearing that, in its effort to "foment change," the Reagan administration was now employing "unambiguous public statements condemning apartheid evils."⁴³ This process had started with Lawrence Eagleburger's speech of 1983, and was to continue throughout the remainder of

the Reagan presidency.⁴⁴ Indeed, the administration set up a high-level Special South and Southern African Public Diplomacy Working Group in September 1985 to oversee this new public relations offensive.⁴⁵ The scale and frequency of the human rights abuses perpetrated by the South African government now demanded open U.S. condemnation, via explicit statements and gestures. Similarly, the administration was aware it also had to address a domestic “perception gap” over its policy back at home.⁴⁶

Pretoria’s detention of black opposition leaders was a specific target of this new rhetoric. As early as August 1984, for instance, a State Department official commented that such acts of imprisonment “appear to undercut the commitment to reform we consider so vital, and they represent a violation of fundamental human rights and political liberties.”⁴⁷ A few days later, observing the growth in the unrest, the State Department informed the South African government that the United States was, “deeply disturbed and concerned by the continuing violence.”⁴⁸

Other diplomatic gestures also came to the fore. A measure of the Reagan administration’s frustration with the South African government could be found in Washington DC’s decision to delay receiving the credentials of the Republic’s new ambassador-designate to the United States. Herbert Beukes was only recognized after a wait of five months.⁴⁹ Similarly, a year later, with the violence continuing, a U.S. consular official was to attend, along with six other Western diplomats and 25,000 South Africans, a mass funeral of unrest victims who were killed in the township of Alexandria.⁵⁰

The president also personally became involved with his administration’s South Africa policy. Breaking a long silence on this topic, Ronald Reagan was to call apartheid “repugnant” during an October 1984 news conference.⁵¹ Six weeks later, the president met Bishop Desmond Tutu at the White House.⁵² As Reagan stated in December of that year, “there are occasions when quiet diplomacy is not enough—when we must remind the leaders of nations who are friendly to the United States that such friendship also carries responsibilities for them, and for us. . . . [We] call upon the government of South Africa to reach out to its black majority by ending the forced removals of blacks from their communities and the detention without trial and lengthy imprisonment of black leaders.”⁵³

The Reagan administration was making its view clear to Pretoria that urgent and tangible reform was now required. On the occasion of Ambassador Nickel’s return to South Africa, after being recalled to Washington DC in the wake of a May 1985 SADF “antiterrorist” raid on Botswana, the State Department let it be known: “we have gotten beyond the point where mere statements or even just statements of intent are adequate.”⁵⁴

The Constants: Backing Reform From Above

It would be wrong, however, to regard this new harsher public rhetoric as heralding a radical shift in policy. At the heart of the administration’s South Africa strategy still remained the constants of the earlier 1980s. The first of these was the idea that the Republic’s government remained an agent for change.

This determined that executive officials were careful, when forced to challenge Pretoria over each violent setback, to blend censure with words of optimism. Chester Crocker, for example, while expressing his government's horror at the Uitenhage shootings, also made it clear in April 1985: "We are seeing today and may see in South Africa for some time to come sporadic violence and governmental repression, coupled with a process of reform. It is going to be a sometimes ugly, messy, process—two steps forward, one step back—with unclear goals, unrevealed agendas, and unanswered questions. It is a complex problem, but one which we cannot walk away from."⁵⁵

The administration thus attempted to broaden the focus of the U.S. domestic audience by putting the township violence into context. Deputy Secretary Dam, for instance, was to highlight to Congress the reforms that the P.W. Botha government had recently undertaken. His checklist included the 1984 constitution, further legalisation of African trade unions, the suspension of forced removals, the permitting of mixed marriages, and the granting of limited property rights to township residents.⁵⁶ Similarly, in December 1984, President Reagan personally informed the American people of the release from detention of a number of black South African opposition leaders. Pointing to private contacts between the two governments, Reagan stated of his administration: "I don't think we're being too bold in taking credit for this."⁵⁷ George Shultz, during the month of the 1985 Uitenhage shootings, was also to remark on the "good measure of progress" that Pretoria had made. He told the National Press Club in Washington DC that "There has been more reform in South Africa in the past 4 years than in the previous 30."⁵⁸ The administration sought to convince its critics that it was precisely these types of changes that needed to be encouraged. It was easy for "stark images of repression" to blot out "the subtler story of reform," but the executive's message made clear that South Africa *was* undergoing change.⁵⁹

In this spirit of optimism, the Reagan administration was to even greet the decision of the Republic's government to impose the first state of emergency in July 1985, with a degree of understanding. Washington DC, although declaring itself "deeply troubled" by this action, reasoned: "The situation has deteriorated to the point that the South African government felt compelled to institute new measures. We hope sincerely that the unrest will abate rapidly, permitting the South African government to remove those measures and get on with the urgent business of reform."⁶⁰

Perhaps the best example of the Reagan administration's misplaced optimism came in August 1985, with the events surrounding P.W. Botha's "Rubicon" speech.⁶¹ At the start of this month, a U.S. delegation including Crocker, Ambassador Nickel, and Robert McFarlane (Reagan's national security advisor), had met with Pik Botha in Vienna, on the understanding that the South African government had something to offer by way of major reform.⁶² Impressed by this briefing, U.S. officials began to pave the way, especially amongst members of Congress, for an announcement from Pretoria regarding these changes.⁶³ Botha's Rubicon speech, however, failed to deliver, leaving the administration's engagement approach tarnished. The South African prime minister, in a demonstration of finger-wagging defiance, announced no reforms of significance. Although

Crocker publicly called this speech “an important statement,” privately, U.S. officials were livid.⁶⁴ Only later would Crocker talk of President Botha “falling into, instead of crossing, the Rubicon in 1985.”⁶⁵

For any engagement policy to have succeeded in the second half of the 1980s, the Reagan administration would have needed some sort of political umbrella to be provided by the South African government. Reforms proving engagement’s credibility were now desperately required. “We did not give [Crocker] that political protection,” observed one South African diplomat, “he was naked.”⁶⁶ Yet, the engagement approach limped on. Crocker explains that the persistence with this strategy during the 1985 and 1986 was an attempt to “underscore our message and buy time for a return to sanity in Pretoria before broad-scale punitive economic measures were adopted in Congress.”⁶⁷

The administration had thus become a prisoner of the National Party’s timetable for change. Officials in Washington DC had to sustain their policy on the scraps of reform that Pretoria did initiate. Consequently, the scale of the administration’s public enthusiasm over what appeared to be very limited progress seemed out of place, especially given the context of the township violence. Indeed, Washington DC occasionally gave the impression that its desire to nurture a friendly relationship with the South African government had become an end in itself. The optimism continued right up until June 1986, and Pretoria’s declaration of the second state of emergency. The United States “must recognize that in the past year the South African Government has begun meaningful reform,” George Shultz stated only days before Pretoria’s 1986 crackdown: “Our policy is based on the premise that South Africa is a society in transition.”⁶⁸

The Constants: Continued Economic Engagement

The second constant of the Reagan administration’s mid-1980s South Africa policy was the continued rejection of any call to isolate the Republic’s economy. When the House of Representatives introduced its sanctions legislation in 1985, Chester Crocker was to call this the “path of madness.” The assistant secretary considered Congress to be “carelessly” throwing “matches into an already explosive and volatile situation.” He instead advocated stronger economic engagement with the Republic, stating, “We Americans are builders not destroyers.”⁶⁹ The administration reasoned that the imposition of sanctions would only be a sign of U.S. “impotence,” in that such measures could only “erode our influence with those we seek to persuade.”⁷⁰

This rigid anti-sanctions stance meant a significant element of the Reagan administration’s refined active Constructive Engagement strategy involved Washington DC defending those transnational corporations that decided to remain in the Republic. The White House was instrumental, for example, in establishing the U.S. Corporate Council on South Africa in September 1985. This body’s activities dovetailed neatly into the administration’s own objectives of encouraging those American institutions that operated in South Africa to stand up and publicize their positive work vis-à-vis countering apartheid. This would demonstrate that there was an alternative to punitive economic sanctions.⁷¹

As George Shultz explained, "the American private sector must remain involved. American companies in South Africa are the building blocks of our influence. That is why we oppose disinvestment."⁷²

The administration's position at the United Nations also permitted continued U.S. economic relations with South Africa. When, in July 1985, the French government was persuaded by the continuing violence in the Republic to support a ban on new economic investment in this country, the United States held the line. Together with the United Kingdom, the Reagan administration was to use its Security Council veto four times in the mid-1980s to prevent binding punitive economic sanctions being imposed.⁷³

The reality was, however, that despite this political protection, the Reagan administration could no longer rely on U.S. TNCs to act as agents of Constructive Engagement. As it was noted above, many of these companies chose to withdraw from the Republic at this time. Even the Reverend Leon Sullivan, author of the Sullivan Principles, was now persuaded that the presence of U.S. firms in this country was inappropriate.⁷⁴ Foreign businesses, through disinvestment, had effectively imposed their own economic sanctions against South Africa.

The Constants: Black Empowerment

The third constant in the Reagan administration's South Africa policy after August 1984 was its program of aid targeting black South Africans. These projects, run since the early 1980s, in the fields of education, union training, black entrepreneurial support, and general humanitarian assistance continued. They were projects designed, in Crocker's words, "to train a new generation of black South Africans who will play a major role in shaping their country's destiny."⁷⁵

One of this new, higher profile, programs was the administration's "match-maker" project.⁷⁶ This initiative involved the U.S. embassy encouraging TNCs operating in South Africa to assist black enterprise. U.S. corporations were asked to tender amongst black entrepreneurs for subcontracted services such as cafeteria or transport needs.⁷⁷ The embassy was also to write to some 230 U.S. executives inviting them to attend a trade fair that the administration cosponsored with the Soweto Chamber of Commerce. Likewise, officials in the Republic assisted the Urban Foundation in the distribution of its *Directory of Black Business*.⁷⁸

Despite these additional projects, U.S. funding for its black empowerment programs actually fell during the financial years 1984 and 1985, to US\$6 million and US\$8 million respectively. In 1983, these projects had been backed with US\$10 million worth of assistance. It was only in 1986, and after, that U.S. public money would be committed to these programs in larger sums.⁷⁹

The Promotion of Negotiation

One component of the mid-1980s South Africa policy that can only hesitantly be classed as a constant was the Reagan administration's advocacy of negotiations. Although the administration's strategy had always involved a vision of

a future in which black and white South Africans would talk to each other to create a new political order, the United States only actively began to promote such contacts after August 1984. The violence prompted Washington DC to move beyond narrowly concentrating on the dynamics of reform from above, and to instead concentrate on the participation of the black representatives in this reform process.

As the forces of state repression began to further constrict opposition activities within the Republic, the Reagan administration developed a line of criticism that Pretoria was silencing the very people it should be talking to.⁸⁰ When events came to a head in July 1985, with the declaration of the first state of emergency, the secretary of state, while at the same time expressing understanding of why the South African government wished to restore law and order, went on to warn Pretoria, “True peace will come only when apartheid ends and the Government negotiates with, rather than locks up, representative black leaders.”⁸¹

Although the Reagan administration still saw the government in Pretoria as the key agent for change, Washington DC was now encouraging National Party leaders to “open doors” to opposition representatives.⁸² As one State Department release of July 1985 read, “what we’re trying to say is it is now time to get into bargaining with the black leadership.”⁸³ What is more, Assistant Secretary of State Crocker argued that the “burden” for initiating these negotiations lay with the government itself.⁸⁴

With Constructive Engagement now suggesting the government in Pretoria should open a dialogue with the Republic’s opposition forces, the Reagan administration realized that it too had to broaden its contacts with the black community. Most publicly, this involved Chester Crocker taking time to visit the townships of Duduza and KwaThema during January 1986.⁸⁵ This was a photo opportunity previously resisted. Probably of more tangible significance, however, was the Reagan administration’s decision to voice its belief that the African National Congress should participate in future negotiations. In August 1985, the State Department encouraged the South African government to view the ANC as “one of a number of important political parties in this situation,” advocating that, in its search for peace, the “Government should be reaching as broadly and as widely as it can, and that includes the A.N.C.”⁸⁶ This represented a distinct adjustment of policy from the approach practised in the earlier 1980s.⁸⁷

The Reagan Administration’s Failure to Win the Domestic Political Battle

Yet, the revamped mode of Constructive Engagement was not to prosper. The executive could not resist the momentum building amongst elite U.S. opinion for the United States to do something about apartheid. Even an “active” version of the administration’s strategy failed to meet this demand. Eventually, the arguments of the antiapartheid movement overwhelmed the executive’s subtler strategy, and the U.S. Congress stepped in to impose comprehensive economic sanctions.

The Reagan administration spent considerable time and resources during the mid-1980s trying to get across the basic message that it opposed apartheid. Likewise, the executive attempted to convince its domestic critics that simplistic gestures would not solve South Africa's troubles. As Crocker argued, the real issue is "not whether apartheid is good or bad, but rather what is the best means of encouraging constructive change in that country. Let us start by recognizing that indignation and strong convictions do not constitute a foreign policy." Punitive sanctions, the assistant secretary argued, may sooth campaigners' emotions, but they would not contribute positively to eradicating apartheid.⁸⁸

As a way forward, the administration suggested a policy could be built around several basic points. In April 1985, Secretary of State Shultz suggested all Americans could agree that southern Africa was an "important part of the world"; that change must occur as peacefully as possible; that apartheid must be eradicated; that the United States was only interested in "real progress," and not just domestic "posturing"; and that the Republic's economic growth would be the "engine" of advancement.⁸⁹ The objective of Shultz's address was to focus the apartheid debate on the substance of policy, moving beyond slogans.

Yet, despite this domestic public relations exercise, the Reagan administration failed to construct a consensus. In particular, Shultz's last point of economic engagement was rejected. An alternative policy was being formulated elsewhere in the U.S. political system based on the sanctions agenda. Even as early as 1984, the executive voiced its worry that there was "a considerable degree of lack of information and misunderstanding as to what it is we stand for."⁹⁰ This "misunderstanding" had become so prominent by the middle of 1986, that the Reagan administration even dropped the phrase Constructive Engagement, in an attempt to distance itself from what these words had come to represent. The administration was fighting a losing battle.

As the implementation of sanctions became inevitable, the executive began to investigate tactics to delay or water down congressional legislation. Eventually, Ronald Reagan signed Executive Order 12532 to prevent the full force of the congressional Anti-Apartheid Bill of 1985 becoming law.⁹¹ The chief executive's message accompanying this Order provides an excellent summary of what active Constructive Engagement stood for. The message started with the now almost obligatory statement declaring that the administration was fundamentally opposed to apartheid: "America's view of apartheid is simple and straightforward: We believe it's wrong. We condemn it. And we're united in hoping for the day when apartheid will be no more." Reagan's statement then went on to stress that the United States should be encouraging "peaceful evolution and reform" in South Africa, arguing that "economic sanctions" could not do this. Instead, the "growing economic power of the black majority" could best eradicate racial discrimination in the Republic. The president also used this message to express his, by this time more personal, belief that certain elements within this country's black opposition should not be supported. He argued, "we must recognize that the opponents of apartheid using terrorism and violence will bring not freedom and salvation, but greater suffering and more opportunities for expanded Soviet influence within South Africa and in the entire region."⁹²

Yet, the Reagan administration did make limited concessions to the sanctions campaign at this time. The executive order prevented U.S. loans being made to the South African government and its parastatals, except in cases involving nondiscriminatory aid projects; it banned the sale of computers to the South Africa Defence Force, the South Africa Police and any other apartheid enforcing agency; it imposed an embargo on the transfer of nuclear technology and materials to the Republic; it tightened the existing arms embargo, stopping U.S. citizens from importing South African ammunition, military vehicles, and arms; it instructed all agencies of the U.S. government located in the Republic to apply the Sullivan Code in their employment practices; it denied federal guarantees for South African contracts involving U.S. corporations that had not signed these principles; it banned the sale of Krugerrands in the United States; it established an advisory committee on South Africa to report back to the president within 12 months; and it suggested that Congress allocate more funds to the U.S. black South African empowerment programs in the forthcoming financial year (see table 8.4).⁹³ Effectively, the United States had now reverted to the provisions imposed during the Carter years, with the additional sanction of banning the sale of Kugerrands.

Although the Reagan administration had accepted that economic sanctions in this limited form were now a necessary pressure to be placed on the South African government, officials made it clear that they regarded any additional economic punitive action inappropriate. The president left no doubt in the minds of Congressional members that if they still wished to impose tougher measures beyond those of his executive order, they would have to do this over an executive veto. And this is exactly what happened.

A Divided Administration

The limited sanctions of Executive Order 12532 may have staved off future congressional action if they had been backed by a unified administration. Yet, this scenario did not play itself out during 1986. Instead, Constructive Engagement became a victim of internal political differences within the executive itself. The administration could no longer adequately manage its own strategy toward South Africa.

The rise of apartheid on the domestic political agenda had given more officials and departments within the Reagan executive an interest in this issue. Conservative agencies had always disagreed with Constructive Engagement as a policy, and the State Department's running of this strategy had likewise drawn occasional internal criticism.⁹⁴ During quieter times, these differences had been managed effectively. However, now that apartheid had become a key political consideration for the administration, fissures began to open publicly over how to proceed. Just as the congressional Republican party was split over Pretoria's racial policies, so was the executive.

President Reagan himself hampered the revamping of Constructive Engagement by remaining somewhat aloof from his administration's official position at this time. The president tended to view this part of the world in the

context of the Cold War. "The African problem is a Russian weapon aimed at us," he had remarked during his 1976 presidential campaign, and his views had evolved little since.⁹⁵ Reagan had also more than once voiced his opinion that the Republic's problems were "not so much racial as they are tribal."⁹⁶

Although Reagan's remarks may have confused the executive's position and created a degree of embarrassment, the infrequency of such comments prior to August 1984 resulted in only slight damage to Constructive Engagement. However, when the president's off-the-cuff remarks became more regular during the mid-1980s, as a result of the renewed media interest, U.S. policy as defined by the State Department began to suffer.⁹⁷ In particular, it was the president's keynote speech of July 1986 that did most to publicly display the divisions that lay within the Reagan administration.

During June and July of 1986, reacting to pressures placed on it by events in South Africa, the Reagan administration undertook a major review of its strategy. As a climax to this evaluation process, the NSC had suggested that the president himself should make a speech to express the executive's position.⁹⁸ It was hoped that such an address would go some way to halt the momentum building in Congress for the imposition of comprehensive sanctions.⁹⁹ In Ambassador Nickel's view, President Reagan as "our most critical and valuable asset" could apply his "gifts at formulating issues simply and conveying sincerity and human decency" to the matter of apartheid.¹⁰⁰ Although Ronald Reagan was to make this speech, it was to be an address neither Nickel, the NSC, nor the State Department wished to hear.

Once the State Department's own draft of this speech had been passed on to the White House for presidential approval, it underwent a dramatic transformation. Patrick Buchanan, the president's Director of Communications, was to dismiss the State Department's text as "relentless Boer bashing."¹⁰¹ Buchanan took it upon himself to rewrite the address, adapting it to his own and the president's more conservative views. Reagan chose to deliver the words of his director of communications as opposed to the preferred draft of the secretary of state, and over George Shultz's express protest.¹⁰²

Although the president's speech voiced the view that "apartheid" was the "root cause of South Africa's disorder," and it suggested that the state of emergency was not the right way for Pretoria to proceed, the address was to give over an inordinate amount of time to both praising the "democratic change" that had already occurred in the Republic, whilst at the same time criticizing the ANC. Ronald Reagan was to talk of the "calculated terror by elements of the African National Congress," the "fear" of the "necklace," "Soviet-armed guerrillas," and made his view quite clear that "the South African Government is under no obligation to negotiate the future of the country with any organization that proclaims a goal of creating a communist state and uses terrorist tactics and violence to achieve it."¹⁰³

Reagan had significantly misjudged the domestic political mood on apartheid. Compliments for his speech were largely confined to the right wing of the Republican Party. Elsewhere, State Department officials let their feelings of puzzlement be known to the press, whilst Bishop Tutu, commenting on Reagan's

remarks from Johannesburg, was to state simply: “The West, for my part, can go to hell.”¹⁰⁴ Reagan’s ambassador to South Africa would later call this speech “one of the ‘Great Communicator’s’ most painful failures.”¹⁰⁵

Although the Reagan administration did attempt to challenge the Congress over its proposed comprehensive sanctions, the divisions within the administration hampered this lobbying effort. The State Department’s attempts to reinvigorate Constructive Engagement were now sunk. Reagan’s address simply failed to convey any sense that the United States genuinely wanted the removal of white minority rule from the Republic, nor did it offer any sympathy for position the of black South Africans. As Chester Crocker complained, looking back to this period, “the President tended to discredit his case by sounding so much like the government from which he was so reluctant to distance himself.”¹⁰⁶ The Congress stepped in to provide policy leadership where the executive, due to its divisions, had failed.

Leading the Congressional charge for comprehensive sanctions were moderate Republicans. Reagan’s personal instincts on South Africa had played a central role in alienating previously loyal members of his party. Senator Richard Lugar, a key Republican manager of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act, reasoned: “I would not have persisted in opposing the President if after all these conversations, debates, and statements I had developed reasonable confidence in his comprehension of what the South African situation was all about . . . the President’s normal passion for democracy and freedom seemed to diminish when Africa came into view.”¹⁰⁷ With other moderate Republicans following Lugar’s lead, the U.S. Congress was to reject all further gestures the executive made in its attempts to delay comprehensive punitive measures. The administration suggested that time should be given for the United States to coordinate its actions with its allies, and that a special presidential envoy should be dispatched to the Republic, but these ideas failed to stem the clamor for sanctions.¹⁰⁸ The U.S. Congress passed its Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Bill of 1986, and then overrode the president’s subsequent veto. Constructive Engagement had lost its domestic battle for survival, and the United States had for the first time imposed a broad range of economic sanctions against the Republic.¹⁰⁹

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CHAPTER 9

“SANCTIONS BY THEMSELVES DO NOT REPRESENT A POLICY”: THE REAGAN, BUSH, AND CLINTON ADMINISTRATIONS, 1986–1994

The Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act may have marked an historic high tide for U.S. activity addressing South Africa, but it did not comprise the sum total of U.S. policy implemented after October 1986. The sanctions triggered by this legislation and the conditions stipulated for their removal dominated the final phase of Washington DC's response to apartheid, but the Reagan, Bush, and Clinton administrations all augmented the CAAA with supplementary policy initiatives. Progressively, each administration met with some success in developing U.S. contacts with the Republic's black community. This assisted the Bush and Clinton executives considerably when the need came to interact with all parties during the constitutional negotiations precipitated by the arrival of President F.W. de Klerk. U.S. officials had now to decide the timing of the lifting of sanctions and how best to support these negotiations.

In surveying U.S. policy with respect to apartheid's endgame, the chapter is divided into four sections. The first of these looks at the events forming the backdrop to this policy. The external input emanating from South Africa itself is assessed, noting Pretoria's initial security crackdown and the quelling of the township uprisings, and then actions that preceded the move to negotiations after P.W. Botha's resignation from office. This first section also examines the changing internal input. In particular, the decision of the U.S. Congress not to enact further punitive measures against the Republic is scrutinized. The chapter's second section then concentrates on policy implemented between 1986 and 1988, the remaining two years of President Reagan's term of office. Despite this administration continuing to oppose sanctions, Constructive Engagement took on a more dynamic character after the passage of the CAAA. The chapter's next two sections chart policy under the Bush and Clinton administrations. Section three concentrates on considerations behind the termination of the CAAA in 1991, while section four assesses the contribution of the United States to the

negotiations process itself. Points of influence and assistance are highlighted, demonstrating a relatively active U.S. policy during this period.

International and Domestic Policy Inputs after 1986

After the passage of the CAAA, apartheid was never again to be such a divisive political issue for U.S. policy makers. This was a direct consequence of two factors. First, events unfolding in the Republic itself eased tensions, and second, the U.S. Congress voted in 1988 not to further assert its authority in this area. A bill that would have imposed a total economic embargo against the Republic was rejected.

Initially, interest in Washington DC concerning apartheid diminished for negative reasons. The government of P.W. Botha had managed to quell the township uprisings by the spring of 1987. This starved the United States of the television pictures that had done so much to fuel the policy debate of the mid-1980s. The full force of the state of emergency and the effectiveness of Pretoria's Total National Strategy that underwrote this crackdown began to tell. Thousands were arrested, and the United Democratic Front and other opposition groups were banned.¹ Once again the antiapartheid movement in South Africa had been decapitated.

Yet, victory for the National Party was brief. Back in 1960, the banning of the ANC and PAC had led to a "lost decade" before labor strikes and the black consciousness movement reignited the liberation struggle. This was not the case during the late 1980s. After the UDF's demise, the black opposition swiftly reorganized in the form of the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), and international headlines were once again being made by 1989. Pretoria found it difficult to nullify this group's activities. The fact that religious leaders such as Frank Chikane, Alan Boesak, and Desmond Tutu took a leading role in this movement added to the government's quandary. South Africa's little remaining international credibility would not have survived the jailing of Tutu, nor did Pretoria wish to spark off another round of township uprisings.

The South African government also had to contend with the economic consequences of political instability. A majority of the transnational corporations present in South Africa prior to the township uprisings had now disinvested from the Republic, inflation was at 16 percent, the Rand had fallen by a third over a decade, and unemployment was increasing. Recently imposed sanctions were not about to topple the South African economy, but during a period of global recession, these measures were beginning to pinch. What is more, US\$8 million of the Republic's loans were due for restructuring by mid-1990, and the world's banks were keenly watching Pretoria for signs of reform that could have justified a debt rollover.²

It was at this point that F.W. de Klerk succeeded P.W. Botha as the Republic's state president. Faced with the above political and economic pressures, South Africa's new head of state oversaw a dramatic series of decisions that would lead to a nonracial democratic South Africa by 1994. In October 1989, Walter Sisulu and seven other prominent political prisoners were released. In November 1989, the

Separate Amenities Act, which had underwritten petty apartheid, was repealed. In February 1990, at the opening of parliament, President de Klerk announced that he was to unban the ANC and PAC, he pledged to release Nelson Mandela, and made known his government's willingness to negotiate a new constitution with this opposition. During June 1990, the state of emergency was partially lifted, and in June 1991 the Population Registration Act, the Group Areas Act, and the Land Act were repealed. Apartheid, in terms of its legislation at least, was at an end. And all this had occurred in the space of 18 months.

At the start of the negotiations, it was evident that F.W. de Klerk was only seeking a limited power sharing agreement with the black opposition. The National Party continued to reject the notion of unfettered majority rule. What is more, there was no guarantee that de Klerk could deliver his party on this issue, let alone the whole of white society. Likewise, there would be opposition to the proposed new dispensation from homeland leaders. But despite suspensions of talks, several flash points of violence, state security forces promoting unrest, the storming of the constitutional conference by right-wing paramilitaries, threatened electoral boycotts, the assassination of a leading ANC/SACP leader, and a death toll of several thousand, the "new South Africa" came into existence after this country's first nonracial poll during April 1994.

The task for policy makers in Washington DC throughout this period was to promote negotiation, even during times when violence had gained the upper hand. The remaining years of the Reagan administration provided fewer opportunities for U.S. diplomats in this assignment, as P.W. Botha's crackdown was in full swing, but the advent of the de Klerk era opened up a range of possibilities, despite a backdrop of continued uncertainty.

The Bush and Clinton executives also enjoyed more freedom from congressional intervention than Reagan had in this latter period. Initially, with P.W. Botha still in power, members of Congress were willing to authorize minor additions to the U.S. sanctions regime. In 1987 for instance, Charles Rangel, chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, was to successfully introduce a bill that ended U.S. tax credits for revenue generated in the Republic.³ As a consequence, U.S. corporations now had to pay taxes to both Pretoria and the U.S. government. This amounted to a levy of some 72 percent. Mobil, the largest remaining U.S. corporation in this market, was to cite this particular piece of legislation as the leading factor for its decision to disinvest from the Republic in 1989.⁴ Another congressional measure in this immediate post-CAAA period was an amendment to the Intelligence Authorization Act of 1987. This rider legally prohibited U.S. intelligence services from exchanging information with their South African counterparts.⁵

Yet, this was as far as the U.S. Congress was prepared to go. This body enacted no other punitive measures confronting apartheid. When, in 1988, several members of Congress pushed for a total U.S. embargo of the South African economy, they failed to generate enough support. Representative Ronald Dellums' bill was approved in the House by 244 votes to 132, and was recommended by the now Democratic-controlled Senate Foreign Relations Committee, but it could not attract enough votes amongst moderate Republicans on the floor of the

Senate.⁶ After the events of 1986, these politicians were generally not inclined to vote against a Republican president for a second time.⁷ As one congressional aide put it, morally "a boil had been lanced with the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act," and given that 1988 was a presidential election year, "it was an issue that people did not care to revisit."⁸

Subsequent to the rejection of Dellums' 1988 bill, events in South Africa itself took over. With F.W. de Klerk assuming the presidency, the legislative momentum for federal sanctions in the United States ended. A majority of congressional members were content with the pace of reform in the Republic, and with the U.S. Congress not seeking to directly influence the ongoing negotiations, Capitol Hill was now satisfied to pass the control of U.S. policy toward South Africa back to the executive.

The Reagan Administration: Working Around the CAAA

With the U.S. Congress largely choosing not to revisit the issue of apartheid after 1986, U.S. foreign policy toward South Africa was left in an odd position. The U.S. response to events in the Republic was left in the hands of the executive, but the White House was not free to implement the strategy it wished to. The Reagan administration's hands were tied by the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act. It was legally required to uphold the very punitive economic sanctions that it considered inappropriate. The danger was that, because of this unwanted constriction, the administration would simply put South Africa on a back burner, and concentrate its resources elsewhere in the world. Yet, to the administration's credit, this did not occur. An active policy toward the Republic was formulated and implemented after October 1986.

In this respect, the Reagan administration, with a few important exceptions, was to accept and incorporate the CAAA into its own policy. As Secretary of State George Shultz assured, "The Administration's doubts about the utility of punitive sanctions were, and are, serious. Nevertheless, they are the law of the land, and we will enforce them."⁹ Looking back to this period, Mike McKinley, a member of the State Department's Africa Bureau, concurred with Shultz's statement. He assessed that the executive adopted the CAAA "hook, line and sinker."¹⁰

To a large extent, this was true. The CAAA did not look too out of place amongst the policy initiatives implemented after October 1986. It made for a useful combination of significant punitive actions registering the U.S. commendation of apartheid, alongside the administration's preferred positive approach offering rewards for engagement. There were, however, several areas where the Reagan executive violated the spirit, if not the letter, of the CAAA.

The administration's most questionable interpretations of the 1986 Act related to uranium purchasing and bank loans. Although the CAAA unambiguously proscribed the importation of South African "uranium and uranium ore" into the United States, the Treasury Department was to classify the compound of uranium hexafluoride, a fuel used in nuclear reactors, as exempt from this embargo. Similarly, although this legislation banned U.S. banks from making new loans

to the Republic, the administration chose to continue to permit "short-term credits" to South Africa. According to United States Federal Reserve figures, U.S. bank lending to the Republic in this category amounted to US\$2 billion in September 1987.¹¹

The Reagan administration also circumvented three other provisions of the 1986 Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act. It justified doing this on constitutional grounds. The U.S. Congress, through the CAAA, had specifically instructed the executive to coordinate its South Africa policy with its Western allies. Although the administration continued to regularly discuss the apartheid issue with European governments, executive officials indicated they would not attempt to persuade these states to impose punitive measures against the Republic. In fact, during October 1986, Washington DC was to lobby the European Community not to include a coal embargo amongst its package of punitive measures.¹² Chester Crocker explained, "We have made it very clear in our view that we are not going to ask other sovereign countries to adopt measures about which we ourselves ... had serious reservations and still have reservations."¹³

Similarly, through section 401(e) of the CAAA, the U.S. Congress had hoped to widen the scope of sanctions against the Republic by instructing the president to, in turn, direct the U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations "to propose that the United Nations Security Council ... impose measures against South Africa of the same type as are imposed by this Act."¹⁴ The Reagan administration categorically refused to do this. Instead, the United States was to use its veto in the Security Council to frustrate such multilateral action.¹⁵ Explaining the refusal to carry out this aspect of the CAAA, Alan L. Keyes, Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, told a congressional hearing that these instructions were "distinct from law." Keyes suggested that if this particular clause of the CAAA was to be implemented it "would be damaging to the interests of the United States and damaging to our ability to conduct our foreign policy effectively, and it is of course the prerogative and the responsibility of the President to make sure that that policy is conducted effectively under the Constitution."¹⁶ The administration was resolute that, under the U.S. Constitution, the Congress had no right to tell the president how the executive should vote at the United Nations.¹⁷

The legislative and executive branches also came into conflict over section 501(b) of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act. Again, the Reagan administration failed to invoke the spirit of the CAAA. This part of the legislation had instructed the president to report, 12 months after this bill's enactment, on the political situation in South Africa.¹⁸ The chief executive was required to recommend further punitive measures against the Republic if no progress had been made. Duly giving account in October 1987, Ronald Reagan declared that he had implemented the CAAA "fully and faithfully," but the president was "unable to report significant progress leading to the end of apartheid and the establishment of a nonracial democracy in South Africa. Indeed, the following review of events in South Africa since October 1986 provides very little hope for optimism about the immediate future."

Despite this assessment, the president made it clear that he would not recommend further punitive actions. The president contended, "While the measures imposed by the 1986 act have registered an important message to the white South African community, and have contributed to our efforts to broaden our contacts with the black opposition groups, the impact has been more negative than positive." The "imposition of additional economic sanctions at this time," he considered, "would not be helpful in the achievement of the objectives which Congress, the American people, and I share."¹⁹

Chester Crocker, supporting the president, explained to Congress that the CAAA had only required the chief executive to make a recommendation on future sanctions; it did not require the administration to actually implement any further punitive measures. As Crocker put it, "the operative terms of this provision are mandatory only with respect to making a report and a recommendation on which sanctions, if any, should be imposed, and that is the unambiguous legislative history of this provision."²⁰

The Reagan administration still resolutely opposed economic sanctions. It publicized arguments that sanctions only served to harm the black population of South Africa, while it held capitalism as the key to the elimination of apartheid. New reasoning portraying the CAAA as a failure augmented these tried and tested arguments.²¹ Within months of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act being passed, for instance, Alan Keyes could be found telling a congressional hearing that this legislation "had none of the effects their sponsors had predicted they would have. Sanctions have put little or no effective economic pressure on the South African business community or the apartheid regime; they have not changed the politics of the South African government; they have not strengthened the forces of democratic reform. On the contrary, sanctions have contributed to poverty and unemployment among blacks; they have contributed to the hardening of white attitudes ...; and they have undercut rather than strengthened U.S. influence with Pretoria."²² The administration also suggested to the U.S. Congress that it would be inadvisable to enact further punitive legislation to avoid prejudicing negotiations that had resumed over the question of Namibia.²³

In this "punitive sanctions versus potential reform via economic development" debate, the Reagan administration's views had changed little. The executive still held a "strong conviction that American business and investment can play a constructive role in South Africa ..."²⁴ Thus the administration continued to "encourage [existing] American investment in South Africa," despite the CAAA banning any new contact of this kind from U.S. TNCs.²⁵ The State Department made its view clear that "We firmly believe that it is now more important than ever for U.S. firms to stay and work for an end to apartheid."²⁶ Likewise, Michael Armacost, the Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, was to call the Reverend Leon Sullivan's decision to withdraw his patronage from the Code of Conduct for U.S. Firms with Affiliates in the Republic of South Africa, the so-called Sullivan Principles, "regrettable."²⁷ Expanding this view, George Shultz put forward the administration's familiar position that, "You don't just throw up your hands and say, 'I don't like it. I'm leaving.' You stay there. You are,

if I may use the term, engaged. So this is our policy—to be engaged and engaged with everybody and we hope that our actions will be constructive.”²⁸

Yet, the Reagan administration’s post-CAAA policy was not just about resisting further sanctions and encouraging U.S. corporations to remain engaged in the Republic. It was more dynamic than this. Indeed, in many ways, the administration’s policy was at its most “constructive” after October 1986. With the sanctions debate resolved, officials were now free to concentrate on more positive contacts between the two countries. Most obviously, the administration started to build useful links with the Republic’s black community, an intercourse that had been significantly absent earlier. Explaining the fundamentals of this refocused South Africa policy in December 1986, Secretary of State George Shultz proposed an approach underwritten by a “positive emphasis on what we are *for*, as well as what we are against.” Additionally, the administration believed that “an effective American policy must be based on a diplomatic effort; sanctions by themselves do not represent a policy.”²⁹

In these closing months of the Reagan administration, the executive did not condemn Pretoria with quite the same passion that the Carter administration had. Washington DC did, however, leave little doubt over its opposition to the Republic’s internal and external security strategies. When, in October 1986, Pretoria was to name the UDF as an “affected organization,” the State Department was to express “regret” at this decision, considering this act to be “a further infringement on the political rights of peaceful opponents of apartheid in South Africa.”³⁰ Pretoria was urged instead to lift its state of emergency.³¹ Likewise, the Reagan administration also publicly displayed its impatience with Pretoria in the broader southern African region. The South African Defence Force’s persistent adventurism across borders brought outright condemnation. George Shultz was even to describe “apartheid” as being “a primary cause of instability throughout southern Africa.”³²

This change in rhetoric also involved a more pessimistic forecast for the Republic’s political future. The administration no longer overemphasized the significance of Pretoria’s policy announcements. The State Department’s view was that, at best, the process of reform from above had stalled. As George Shultz observed, “Despite internal pressure . . . there is scant evidence of the sort of drastic, profound change in that country’s laws and political and economic society which is necessary if violence is to be avoided. The determination of the white minority to retain its monopoly on political power appears to have grown apace . . .”³³ This abandonment of the idea that imminent white-led reform was about to bring meaningful progress toward a new democratic order represented a considerable shift in U.S. policy post-October 1986.

The Reagan administration’s South Africa policy was also given a new dimension in October 1986 with the confirmation of Edward Perkins as the U.S. ambassador to the Republic. Perkins purposefully set out to leave no doubt in the minds of South Africans the extent of the American peoples’ rejection of apartheid. He aimed to build contacts with all the parties in the Republic, explaining to each community the exact purpose of U.S. actions toward their country. Above all, the ambassador worked to have the U.S. embassy regarded by all as an agent for change.³⁴

Ambassador Perkins was to use language and make gestures that had not been seen or heard from a U.S. diplomat in the South African context since the 1970s. After keeping a low profile for a period after his arrival, Perkins chose to confront the Republic's government with an article written for the journal *Leadership*. In this piece he rejected the whole premise behind the 1984 constitution, and the subsequent attempts to tinker with apartheid legislation. Perkins wrote, "I do not think that elaborate schemes which try to give an impression of black representation, but actually maintain white power, will work. They are as doomed as the concept of apartheid itself." The ambassador then went on to hint that the United States was looking for a future settlement in South Africa based on the principle of one person, one vote. Perkins wrote, "A valid political system here must be one that correlates with the demographics of the country." He advocated, "a government that truly represents the majority of South Africans."³⁵ This style of language, repeated by the secretary of state in September 1987, had not been directed at Pretoria since Cyrus Vance's May 1977 Vienna press conference.³⁶

Edward Perkins and the State Department were also to make several strong gestures to accompany this language. The ambassador, in January 1987, for example, attended the court case of 19 UDF members charged with treason by the South African state. Indeed, a warm relationship seemed to develop between Perkins and these detainees, with leaders Popo Molefe, Moss Chikane, and Patrick Lekota privately expressing their gratitude for the assistance and sympathy the U.S. embassy had extended to them during this trial.³⁷ The ambassador also took the decision to attend a church service in April 1987 that had been declared illegal by the South African government. This act of civil disobedience enabled Perkins to join a service praying for those children detained by the security forces. The State Department made it clear they fully supported the actions of their envoy.³⁸ Similarly, the U.S. consular general in Cape Town, a year later, was present at a religious service held as a precursor to a larger demonstration against the government.³⁹ Even activists within the antiapartheid movement were impressed with the work of U.S. diplomats in South Africa at his time.⁴⁰

The Reagan administration now more convincingly held the South African government to internationally recognized standards of human rights. After a "period of thought" within the executive, George Shultz was to deliver a speech in New York, during September 1987, defining exactly what it was the United States wished to see in the Republic. Shultz was attempting to use "American ideas, to promote peaceful change in South Africa."⁴¹ He declared, "We Americans do not claim a monopoly on democratic concepts for another country [but there are] basic ideas that we believe must be addressed by all South Africans ..." He went on to list these principles:

- A new constitutional order for a united South Africa establishing equal political, economic, and social rights ...;
- A democratic electoral system with multiparty participation and universal franchise for all adult South Africans;
- Effective constitutional guarantees of basic human rights ...;
- an independent judiciary ...;

- A constitutional allocation of powers between the national government and its constituent regional and local jurisdictions, in keeping with South Africa's deeply rooted regional and cultural traditions; and
- An economic system that guarantees economic freedom for every South African ...⁴²

Whereas before the Reagan administration expected only vague evidence of "reform" or "progress" from the South African government, now specific goals were defined. The objective of Shultz listing these principles, according to Crocker, was aimed "at challenging both the government and the black opposition to think seriously about where to take South Africa in the future."⁴³

Indeed, U.S. policy toward South Africa now explicitly sought to promote talks between black and white representatives in the Republic. Reform from above was now not the sole focus. As Crocker told the U.S. Congress in June 1987, "We are seeking to get negotiations started. We are seeking to float our ideas, to keep channels open, to communicate ourselves with all parties. We're looking to see if there can be formulas developed that would lead to an end to violence and the opening of negotiations."⁴⁴ In this respect, the administration welcomed the decision of a group of influential Afrikaners to meet the ANC in Dakar during 1987.⁴⁵ Washington DC was also to encourage a 1987 *indaba*, where community groups had come together to discuss constitutional change.⁴⁶ Although neither the National Party nor the UDF were represented at these talks, the administration described this Durban meeting as "another hopeful example of whites and non-whites working together towards genuine power sharing."⁴⁷

Perhaps more symbolic than its support for a dialogue between South Africans were the efforts of the Reagan administration to open up its own contacts with the black community. Here again, the work of Ambassador Perkins improved the U.S. position. Even before he had officially presented his credentials to the South African government, for example, Edward Perkins had met privately with Albertina Sisulu, copresident of the UDF, and the partner of the jailed ANC President Walter Sisulu. Appointments with Winnie Mandela, the labour leaders Cyril Ramaphosa and Jay Naidoo, and representatives of the Azanian People's Organization followed. The U.S. embassy sought contact with South Africans right across the political and racial spectrum. The ambassador was also highly visible. He made a point of visiting a different church and community every Sunday, while the U.S. presence at the journalist Percy Qoboza's funeral gained the embassy enormous credibility.⁴⁸ High-ranking State Department officials were also to take time to meet various African leaders. Both Shultz and Armacost were to visit Africa after October 1986, while back in Washington DC, the secretary of state was to meet Chief Buthelezi, Archbishop Tutu, and the Reverend Allan Boesak.⁴⁹

It was Shultz's meeting with ANC President Oliver Tambo in January 1987, however, that did most to convince black South Africans that the Reagan administration was now more serious about developing a better dialogue with the Republic's opposition movements. This meeting came about as part of the

administration's stated policy of raising "the level and the frequency" of the U.S. contacts with the African National Congress.⁵⁰ A report commissioned by the secretary of state had concluded plainly, "At a time when the United States and most of the international community of nations are urging the South African government to enter into a dialogue with black leaders, it is more important than ever that U.S. officials undertake creative and sensitive initiatives in this critical area."⁵¹

Ignoring the thrust of President Reagan's August 1986 speech, which had effectively decried the ANC as a terrorist organization, the State Department pressed ahead with arranging this high-level meeting.⁵² Assistant Secretary of State Crocker had met Tambo in London during September 1986. This paved the way for Shultz's talks with the ANC's president in Washington DC four months later.⁵³ In reality, these high-level meetings were only symbolic, as the two sides held radically differing views on what the U.S. role in the South African conflict should be, and the administration was selective about who it talked to in the ANC.⁵⁴ Indeed, President Reagan himself later refused to meet Tambo.⁵⁵ Yet, the Reagan administration had tentatively begun to engage all sides in the conflict.⁵⁶ Again, this was something that had been avoided prior to the passage of the CAAA.

The Reagan administration's post-CAAA South Africa policy also saw a reinvigorated aid program as part of its efforts to build stronger ties to the Republic's black community. The secretary of state was to declare, "If we want to be taken seriously in southern Africa, we must put the resources on the line . . ."⁵⁷ Congress enthusiastically agreed to allocate more money for South African programs. Between 1986 and 1988, an average of US\$23.5 million was provided annually for these projects, a large increase on the sub-US\$10 million sums that had been allocated during the earlier years of the administration.⁵⁸ On the ground, Ambassador Perkins used this money to fund numerous small-scale projects, to increase the breadth of the embassy's contacts.⁵⁹ With a USAID mission in Pretoria being authorized during 1986, new programs were added to the existing educational and entrepreneurial promotion projects. U.S. money was to assist black leadership development initiatives, teacher training, legal representation organizations, adult education, first aid courses for township residents, and projects amongst rural agricultural communities. Many of these programs were administered through "conflict resolution centers," such as church organizations, civic associations, and university bodies.⁶⁰

As Ambassador Perkins later explained, it had taken some time, but the Reagan administration was now beginning to understand the unique "concept of community" amongst black South Africans. The executive had come to the conclusion that these civic groups could be a "very positive" force for change in the Republic.⁶¹ Similarly, Undersecretary Armacost explained that these projects equipped black South Africans "with the skills they can use tomorrow," enabling these people to "take their rightful place in a multicultural society."⁶²

The irony of the passage of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act was that, instead of killing off Constructive Engagement, this legislation had actually made the Reagan administration's South Africa strategy rounded and more effective.

The executive's unease over economic sanctions still gave U.S. officials a degree of credibility amongst their counterparts in Pretoria, yet the fact that sanctions were actually in place also opened doors to the Republic's black community. After October 1986, the United States began to develop this unique position of influence. Most significantly, Edward Perkins had placed the U.S. embassy in South Africa in a useful position of mediation.

For the most part, when it came to southern Africa, the Reagan administration, in its last months, would concentrate on the Angolan/Namibian linkage negotiations. It had little to gain short term within the Republic itself. Therefore the administration considered it more realistic that it "could get something regionally" as a victory for Constructive Engagement.⁶³ And, indeed, agreements on Namibia's independence and Cuban troop withdrawal from Angola would be reached in the last days of Reagan's term of office. However, on the ground in South Africa, small steps had also been made. Almost inadvertently, the CAAA and the executive's policy adjustments in the wake of this legislation had left future U.S. administrations something to work with in the Republic. The United States was now engaged with both government and opposition. As a consequence, Reagan had left a legacy whereby opportunities could be constructed, enabling Washington DC to influence apartheid's denouement.

The Bush Administration and the Lifting of Sanctions

George Bush and F.W. de Klerk assumed the presidency of their respective countries within weeks of each other. The progressive nature of the de Klerk government now gave Washington DC much more to work with. There was scope to further develop the contacts that Edward Perkins and his colleagues had initiated amongst the black community, and this could be combined with influence already enjoyed within the Republic's government. Relations with both these parties placed the United States in a good position as a potential mediator for forthcoming negotiations. First, however, the issue of whether and when to lift U.S. sanctions had to be settled.

The position of the Bush administration on sanctions was very similar to its predecessor's. The White House opposed any further punitive measures directed at the Republic. President Bush went on record to describe an economic embargo as "counterproductive," adding, "I happen to think American jobs there make good sense. And I don't think they perpetuate the status quo."⁶⁴ The administration's voting record in the United Nations reflected this stance.⁶⁵ The president's delegation in New York frustrated the wishes of the majority of member states, just as previous generations of U.S. representatives had.

Yet, it was not a case of more of the same in the domestic arena. Unlike its predecessor, the Bush administration went out of its way to explain itself to the U.S. Congress. In 1989, the new Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Herman Cohen, testified before the House of Representatives that the CAAA would be implemented "fully and faithfully."⁶⁶ He also let it be known that the administration wanted to move away from the policy conflicts of the mid-1980s.⁶⁷ Indeed, Cohen, in this spirit of cooperation, was able to reach an agreement with

the U.S. Congress over future sanctions. Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in October 1989, the assistant secretary amended his prepared statement to acknowledge: "Sanctions have played a role in stimulating new thinking within the white power structures."⁶⁸ A deal had been struck.

The Bush administration wanted to allow a "reasonable time" to see if de Klerk's new, more pragmatic, rhetoric would amount to anything. In order to buy this (sanction-free) time, Cohen gave a pledge to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the Bush administration would "consult" with its allies over further punitive measures should the de Klerk initiative disappoint.⁶⁹ A deadline for meaningful reform had therefore been set. Edward Kennedy, a major force behind the passage of the CAAA in the Senate, supported this approach, as did Representative William Gray, this legislation's key sponsor in the House. Gray stated, "we should not push on additional sanctions at this time."⁷⁰

Assistant Secretary Cohen later confided that he felt able to make this agreement with the Senate, not because he felt future measures would be appropriate, but because he "knew when February came around, the demand for sanctions would no longer be valid."⁷¹ The Bush administration had successfully gambled on major reforms being imminent. Five months later, de Klerk announced that the ANC and PAC would be unbanned, Mandela was to be released, and negotiations initiated. The push for additional sanctions within mainstream U.S. politics was now at an end.

From this point onward, the South Africa policy of the United States was about maintaining and developing contacts with all parties in the Republic, helping to ease the negotiations process. Indeed, as early as June 1989, President Bush had himself met with Albertina Sisulu at the White House.⁷² In that Sisulu was copresident of the UDF, this appointment confirmed the willingness of the United States to talk to South Africans from a range of backgrounds. Secretary of State James Baker was likewise to visit Namibia and South Africa in 1990. Here he met de Klerk and Mandela, and was even personally escorted on tour of a Cape Town township by the now freed Walter Sisulu.⁷³ Gone was the former administration's position that Washington DC should only talk to the "right kind" of South Africans.⁷⁴

It was to be George Bush's White House meetings with Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk however, that proved most significant. Demonstrating support for the negotiations process, the *de facto* leader of the ANC was invited to call at the White House during June 1990, whilst a little later, in September, de Klerk became the first South African head of state to visit the Oval Office since Jan Smuts in 1946.⁷⁵

Effectively, both Mandela and de Klerk came to the United States seeking assurances on the same issue: sanctions. Mandela wanted existing U.S. punitive measures to remain in place until the negotiations had been successfully concluded. Invited to address a joint session of Congress, Mandela's message was clear:

Despite the admitted commitment of President de Klerk to walk this road with us, and despite our acceptance of his integrity and the honesty of his purposes, we

would be fools to believe that the road ahead of us is without major hurdles ... we still have a struggle on our hands. ... We have yet to arrive at the point when we can say that South Africa is set on an irreversible course leading to its transformation into a united, democratic and non-racial country. We plead that you cede the prerogative to the people of South Africa to determine the moment when it will be said that profound changes have occurred and an irreversible process achieved, enabling you and the rest of the international community to lift sanctions.⁷⁶

Mandela's U.S. tour was a hard act to follow for de Klerk, but three months later the South African president assured Bush during their White House meeting that the negotiations process was now "irreversible."⁷⁷

Sanctions were not to be lifted in 1990. The Bush administration chose not to act in the wake of de Klerk's dramatic February announcement, nor his September visit. The state president was apparently moved to tears by the reception he received from the White House, and felt South Africa "had once again rejoined the mainstream of humanity."⁷⁸ Similarly, George Bush was quick to praise his guest's courage and his actions, and agreed that the reform process was now "irreversible." But despite this cordiality, the CAAA remained in force.

Bush let it be known immediately after his talks with de Klerk:

Although our meetings today were not about sanctions, obviously, we discussed it; the topic did come up. ... Our goal must be to support the process of change, and of course, I will consult fully with the Congress on these issues. And as you know, all the conditions set in our legislation have not yet been made, in spite of the dramatic progress that we salute here today. But let me emphasize that these conditions are clear-cut and are not open to reinterpretation, and I do not believe in moving the goalposts.⁷⁹

The conditions that President Bush was referring to were stipulated in section 311(a) of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act. The text of this legislation directed that the CAAA may be terminated by the president if five prerequisites had been met: the release of all political prisoners (including Nelson Mandela); the ending of the state of emergency; the unbanning of political parties; the repeal of the Group Areas Act and the Population Registration Act; and the initiation of good faith negotiations between the government and "truly representative members of the black majority."⁸⁰ The administration was therefore not yet in a position where it could lift the CAAA sanctions. Pretoria had still to release a number of political prisoners, totally end its state of emergency, and repeal the Group Areas and Population Registration acts.

Pretoria was adjudged to have met these conditions by June 1991. According to the Johannesburg *Sunday Star*, de Klerk was following a set formula agreed with officials in the United Kingdom and the United States.⁸¹ With an additional release of prisoners, and further repeal of apartheid legislation, the U.S. response was rapid. Within a fortnight, President Bush had lifted the CAAA sanctions via executive order.⁸² Explaining his administration's position, Bush reminded the Republic's government that, "Much remains to be done; let's be very clear on

that point," but the president considered that South Africa had fulfilled the five obligations of the CAAA, and he acted accordingly. Bush reasoned:

The peaceful transition to the new South Africa will not occur in a vacuum. South Africa must achieve full economic health through a strong rate of growth if it is to meet the expectations of all South Africans for a better life. The end of sanctions on trade and investment will encourage this process. And we hope that State and local governments and private institutions in the United States will take note of our action and act accordingly to help build a new South Africa, to help build employment opportunity in South Africa.

The president noted in his statement that all additional (non-CAAA) sanctions still remained in place, maintaining a degree of leverage for U.S. diplomats.⁸³

Just four months earlier, Nelson Mandela had again asked the United States "not to be hasty about reviewing sanctions."⁸⁴ Yet, at the risk of its developing good working relationship with the ANC, the Bush administration had taken the first opportunity it could to terminate the CAAA. Mandela was privately "shocked and disappointed" with Bush's decision, while Cyril Ramaphosa, the Secretary-General of the ANC, publicly called this move "premature." The position of the antiapartheid movement had always been that sanctions should stay in place until a final and irreversible settlement had been reached. Mandela thought more should have been extracted from the South African government prior to lifting the CAAA sanctions.⁸⁵

The Bush administration, however, with its continued opposition to sanctions, had a different strategy in mind. Herman Cohen's interpretation of the CAAA surfaced during a July 1991 hearing of the House of Representatives. The assistant secretary of state argued that, when it was passed, the CAAA was not meant to reward Pretoria only when a nonracial democracy was established. Instead, this legislation was about encouraging the National Party government to make *initial* steps toward negotiation. It was about persuading Pretoria to undertake the fundamental reforms that would permit constitutional talks. And this is exactly how the administration used the CAAA. Now that Pretoria had met the five criteria, and continued to negotiate, the National Party was rewarded by a progressive removal of sanctions.⁸⁶ In particular, this approach was designed to help de Klerk ward off opposition from the "white right" within South Africa, enabling Pretoria to demonstrate tangible benefits of reform.

Bush continued this strategy of reward as the negotiations evolved. In October 1991, for instance, the White House removed the U.S. embargo on the sale of computers, aircraft, and petroleum products to the South African military.⁸⁷ Similarly, in February 1992, the president authorized the U.S. Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank to once again offer loans and guarantees with respect to South African contracts. At the same time, South Africa was reclassified a "friendly state" with respect to the Foreign Assistance Act.⁸⁸ Again, these measures were portrayed as helping to ease the negotiations process.

Effectively, the sanctions debate was now closed in the United States. The Bush administration had removed those punitive measures that were under its control, whereas the incoming Clinton administration chose not to seek the removal of

any of the remaining measures. The United States still banned nuclear transfers to the Republic; prohibited intelligence sharing; required fair employment practices from businesses seeking Export-Import Bank assistance; embargoed remaining gray area items being sold to the Republic's security forces; refused South African related tax credits; instructed its officials to advocate withholding International Monetary Fund finance from countries practicing apartheid; maintained the U.N. mandatory arms embargo; and had in place a myriad of other state and local government imposed restrictions targeting purchasing contracts and investments involving businesses associated with the apartheid economy.⁸⁹ Clinton's position effectively ended any hopes that the anti-sanctions lobby had by way of continuing to chip away at this list of provisions. The new president took the view that he would only recommend the removal of these remaining sanctions when signaled to do so by the ANC. The U.S. ambassador to South Africa, Princeton N. Lyman, recalled how President de Klerk "visibly winced" when he was informed of this stance.⁹⁰

The Bush and Clinton Administrations: Assisting Negotiations

The end of the sanctions debate did not result in either the Bush or Clinton administration losing interest in the Republic. As a December 1992 review of U.S. policy toward this part of the world put it, "South Africa continues to require special attention. The end of apartheid and the creation of a new, multiracial South African society will continue to be a high U.S. priority and therefore warrant a special activist policy."⁹¹ Likewise, Assistant Secretary Cohen highlighted that the CAAA had been only "one facet of a comprehensive U.S. approach toward South Africa. Our goal remains firm and unswerving—to encourage broad based negotiations towards the establishment of a non-racial, multi-party democracy in South Africa ... The role of the United States in helping bring about democracy in South Africa will continue to be an active one."⁹²

Through this activism, both Bush and Clinton thought the United States could play a significant role in apartheid's endgame. The Bush administration proposed, somewhat immodestly, that the "high regard of the U.S. held by all elements in that country will be a great asset." Clinton officials concurred. They thought the United States could be a key facilitator.⁹³ In reality, however, South Africans on all sides were less keen to have the United States as a direct party to their negotiations. Washington DC's advances in this respect were rebuffed. Herman Cohen later recounted how at a White House diplomatic reception President Bush and Secretary of State Baker had been engaged in "cornering and buttonholing" their South African guests, "saying 'you've got to have mediator, we really want to help.'" President Bush was also to telephone Nelson Mandela directly on this issue. On both occasions, the ANC's response was polite rejection.⁹⁴ F.W. de Klerk similarly declined the administration's proposal. The State President wrote to George Bush: "It cannot be expected that South Africans should surrender responsibility for determining their own future."⁹⁵ De Klerk later clarified this position. He recalled, "We wanted to achieve a South African solution agreed between South Africans."⁹⁶

Despite this gentle rebuff, forcing Washington DC to temper its vision, U.S. officials did contribute to the negotiations process. It was a more subtle input, and less central than first envisaged, but both the Bush and Clinton administrations implemented an active South Africa policy throughout this period.

At its most basic, the U.S. strategy was to offer support from the sidelines. Whether it was to welcome milestones reached in talks, to condemn an outburst of violence, or to urge parties back to the negotiating table, Washington DC was attentive in issuing reassuring statements.⁹⁷ Both executives also made sure that they developed contacts with all groups engaged in the process. This required U.S. officials to talk to individuals that Washington DC had previously avoided. In December 1992, for instance, Ambassador Lyman met Lucas Mangope, the president of the "independent" homeland of Bophuthatswana. This was the first time that representatives of these two "countries" had officially held talks. Although the Bush administration made clear that this summit was in no way to be interpreted as U.S. recognition of Mangope's government, this meeting provided unmistakable evidence that the United States too was now prepared to negotiate with those it previously disapproved of.⁹⁸

Ambassador Lyman also built a working relationship with Chris Hani, the Secretary General of the South African Community Party (SACP), and Joe Slovo, the former leader of the SACP.⁹⁹ Contacts were also developed with the PAC and Azanian Peoples Organization (AZAPO). This intercourse was far removed from the neglect of the Republic's black opposition seen earlier under Constructive Engagement, or the suspicious first meetings held between the parties in the mid-1980s. The fact that Lyman, after the SACP leader's assassination, attended both Hani's funeral and his memorial service, the only foreign diplomat to do so, won the ambassador greater respect amongst the black community. Indeed, a measure of exactly how far this relationship had come can be gauged by not only the fact that U.S. officials were invited to ANC President Oliver Tambo's funeral, but also that President Clinton's representative, Donna Shalala, ended her oration with the exhalation "*Amandla!*"¹⁰⁰

The United States also provided direct technical assistance to the negotiations. As Ambassador Lyman recalls in his memoirs: "Some of the most difficult issues in the negotiations related to federalism versus centralized authority, affirmative action, amnesty for violations of human rights, power sharing and electoral systems. On every one of these issues, the United States provided a plethora of experts, seminars, education travel, and training." Dozens of U.S. experts were flown to the Republic to offer advice, while many of the negotiators themselves visited the United States to attend workshops. Lyman calculated that of the 27 ministers in Mandela's first cabinet, 11 had participated in the United States Information Agency visitors' program during this period.¹⁰¹ Indeed, one U.S. embassy staff member remembers that, in terms of this advice, "supply outran demand." The South African negotiators "could not readily absorb all that we had and other donors were offering."¹⁰² This was undoubtedly true. Numerous states and nongovernment organizations had been inspired to offer their assistance to the talks. Some of this surplus help, however, can also be accounted for by negotiators resisting too much outside influence. The goal, after all, was an indigenously crafted South African solution.

As well as concentrating on supporting the negotiations directly, the United States also expanded its “empowerment” projects operating in broader South African society. The programs started by Edward Perkins were now in full swing. The United States supported local conflict resolution groups with US\$8.2 million per annum, while voter education received US\$10 million worth of aid.¹⁰³ The idea was that South Africans should be assisted to enable them, once the negotiations were concluded, to make use of their hard-won rights, freedoms, and new institutions. Overall, funding for these empowerment programs rose from US\$40 million annually in 1989 and 1990, to US\$80 million by 1993 and 1994.¹⁰⁴ When the elections actually came in 1994, the United States contributed a further US\$35 million to support the mechanics of the poll itself, and US\$10 million was allocated to assist the political parties’ campaign.¹⁰⁵

In terms of specific influence over the negotiations themselves, the United States did, at various key points, make important recommendations and guarantees that undoubtedly helped sway opinion. The precise effect of this advice is impossible to measure, and should not be overestimated, but several interventions are certainly worthy of note. As early as 1992, Washington DC backed calls that the future South African state should be federal in nature. This favored the positions, at this time, of the National Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). The United States thought federalism a sound counter to potential ideological or ethnic dominance. Assistant Secretary Cohen was careful to warn, however, that within any political system, “Minorities have a right to safeguards; [but] they cannot expect a veto.”¹⁰⁶

Similarly, a year later, the United States, responding to National Party requests (and with the ANC’s approval), agreed to make a statement that went some way to guarantee decisions made by the constitutional convention. This gesture was designed to reassure the Republic’s white community. It was hoped that talk of veto rights would diminish if the United States underwrote the basic principles established by the negotiations. The new Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, George Moose, before the House Subcommittee on Africa in September 1993, let it be known that although the United States would not be a formal party to the final constitutional agreement, Washington DC expected “that all parties will abide by their preelection commitments and that our support for the newly elected government will be in the context of that government’s respecting those commitments.”¹⁰⁷

Also of significance were two positions that the United States took toward the end of the negotiations process. In the first instance, Washington DC was unswerving in its calls for the date of South Africa’s first nonracial elections not to be altered. Talks came under severe pressure as the appointed hour approached. In particular, Mangosuthu Buthelezi’s Inkatha Freedom Party had yet to be won over. The IFP threatened to boycott the poll, fuelling an already violent atmosphere. Buthelezi was holding out for considerable autonomy for his homeland by demanding a confederal rather than federal a constitution. Given his pro-West, pro-capitalist, and anti-sanctions outlook, Buthelezi had made many friends in Washington DC. Yet, now, both the Bush and Clinton administrations were willing to sideline their support for this individual. Washington DC chose instead

to recognize the National Party and the ANC as the key negotiating parties, effectively marginalizing the IFP. President Bush sent a letter to Buthelezi in September 1992 to this effect. Although the Kwazulu chief minister had been welcome in the White House during June 1991 and Bush recognized Buthelezi as a "key figure" in the negotiations, it was made clear that the United States did not support his call for autonomy or a confederal system.¹⁰⁸ Reinforcing this position, the Clinton administration continually urged that the elections set for April 1994 should remain in place, and not postponed to address the IFP's outstanding grievances.¹⁰⁹

The United States can also claim a degree of credit for persuading General Constand Viljoen to make his last-minute decision to enter the democratic process. The General, holding considerable influence within the Republic's Afrikaner community, registered the participation of his Freedom Front party for the April elections just hours before the required deadline. At the time, the white right was imploding organizationally, and violence was the consequence. The failed unholy alliance between Afrikaner and conservative homeland leaders threatened to spur chaos. It was amongst this confusion that U.S. officials managed to exert some influence. Viljoen's own reasoning was assisted by briefings from Ambassador Lyman and a delegation from the U.S. Department of Defense. Close contacts that the United States had kept with the General over a period of time permitted the ambassador to act as a last minute point of liaison between the Viljoen and the ANC, securing guarantees that resulted in the Freedom Front electoral commitment.¹¹⁰ With this act, the threat of a revolt by the white right began to diminish.

The final apartheid-related acts of the U.S. government addressed the removal of remaining sanctions. The Clinton administration had pressed Mandela to agree to this during July 1993. The ANC, however, remained cautious, and Clinton, true to his word, did not press the issue.¹¹¹ Instead, the go-ahead came two months later. Mandela, speaking before the U.N. Special Committee Against Apartheid, announced: "In response to the historic advances towards democracy that have been achieved ... and to help create the necessary conditions for stability and social progress, we believe the time has come when the international community should lift all economic sanctions against South Africa." The ANC leader asked only that the arms embargo and restrictions on nuclear transfers remain in place, until after the elections.¹¹² And this is the advice that the Clinton administration took.

Working in partnership with the U.S. Congress, in November 1993 President Clinton signed into law the South African Democratic Transition Support Act.¹¹³ This legislation repealed the remaining punitive provisions of the CAAA, and authorized the president to negotiate new civil aviation and double taxation treaties with the Republic (which were respectively finalized in 1996 and 1997).¹¹⁴ The 1993 Transition Act also removed all Ex-Im Bank restrictions relating to South Africa. When signing this bill, Clinton took the opportunity to announce that he would dispatch Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown to South Africa in order to start assessing what could be done to revive economic links between the

two countries.¹¹⁵ On the eve of the election, the details of a US\$600 million aid package for the new South African government were made public. In particular, this U.S. money targeted key elements of the ANC's reconstruction program: the building of homes and the provision of education and health care.¹¹⁶

The remaining punitive sanctions were removed in a piecemeal fashion. In the United Nations, during October 1993, the U.S. delegation supported the lifting of all multilateral and unilateral economic sanctions still in force against the Republic, and then in May 1994 the Security Council, by consensus, ended the long running arms embargo.¹¹⁷ Unilateral U.S. restrictions on the sale of arms to the Republic, however, were not lifted until February 1998. This was as a consequence of a protracted dispute, the first between Washington DC and the "new South Africa," over the extradition of South African nationals alleged to have violated the U.S. embargo in the 1980s.¹¹⁸ Four years of negotiations ensued. In the meantime, cooperation between the intelligence services of the two countries were put on a normal footing by the Intelligence Authorization Act of 1995, and nuclear contact was resumed under full IAEA safeguards in September of that year.¹¹⁹ The federal government of the United States had now thus resumed full and normal relations with the Republic of South Africa, and President Clinton urged the U.S. states, municipalities, and American business to do likewise.¹²⁰ At long last, Washington DC no longer had to juggle strategic and economic interests with its human rights concerns in this part of the world.

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CONCLUSION

“It is the Administration’s earnest hope that when the historical record is finally written, there will be no shadow of doubt where the United States stood on one of the great moral and political issues of our time.”¹ These were the words of Philip C. Habib, President Carter’s Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, testifying before Congress during March 1977. Habib was expressing his wish that posterity would be kind in its judgment of U.S. foreign policy toward apartheid South Africa.

To some degree Habib’s hope was justified. Washington DC did take a stand against apartheid. U.S. officials consistently voiced their disapproval over Pretoria’s racial policies throughout this era, and from 1964 onward, an arms embargo was implemented to back this rhetoric. Yet, the evidence presented in this book suggests that the overall U.S. record on apartheid is not without ambiguity. Historians cannot be as generous as Habib hoped due to questions remaining over the strategies adopted by successive presidents, and the consequences of an ever-present conflict of interests. Over the years, the pursuit of more tangible strategic and economic concerns in South Africa had the effect of blurring the U.S. position on human rights, beyond Habib’s “shadow of doubt.”

The U.S. Record on Apartheid: Human Rights

Once the implications of apartheid began to dawn on the international community during the early 1950s, Washington DC started to distance itself rhetorically from the Republic’s government. The initial instincts of the Truman and Eisenhower administrations to simply side step the emerging U.N. dispute over Pretoria’s racial policies were not sustainable. An avoidance of public comment was therefore replaced with statements expressing friendly concern. This language was then modified toward the end of the 1950s with a harder line, mirroring the development of Pretoria’s policies themselves. After the 1960 Sharpeville shootings, all U.S. administrations routinely condemned apartheid. Likewise, no administration chose to support Pretoria by recognizing the independent homelands created by grand apartheid. In as much as all branches, at all levels of the U.S. government publicly expressed their opposition to the Republic’s institutionalized racism, the position of the United States was clear.

A similarly strong position was taken over Namibia. From the time of the opening debates within the United Nations, Washington DC always supported the majority view that Pretoria should relinquish its mandate of South West Africa, and pass responsibility for this territory over to U.N. trusteeship. The United States likewise voted with the majority in 1968 to unilaterally terminate the Republic's mandate (in the absence of any decisive opinion emanating from the International Court of Justice). All the administrations discussed in this book favored the installation of a representative government in Windhoek.

In seeking a transition to majority rule in both South Africa and Namibia, the United States also frequently issued statements calling upon Pretoria to temper its security operations. Whether it was the clampdown in the 1950s surrounding the Defiance Campaign, the Sharpeville shootings in 1960, the banning of the ANC and PAC and the trial of its members, the suppression of the black consciousness movement in the 1970s, the murder of Steve Biko, or police tactics used during the 1980s township uprisings, Washington DC employed both public and private channels to register its disapproval. Although sometimes this rhetoric was couched in terms offering Pretoria a degree of understanding or conciliation, avoiding the sharper language utilized by non-Western states, even a cursory analysis of U.S. words expended on the issue of apartheid demonstrates a successful conveyance of the opposition of the American people to this system of government.

Reinforcing this language was the ongoing management of U.S.-funded development and "empowerment" programs amongst the Republic's black community. This activity represented the most tangible U.S. government commitment to its human rights concerns inside South Africa. As the apartheid era progressed, the United States allocated more resources to these projects. At first these schemes were confined to small scholarship programs permitting South Africans of all races to study in the United States. By the 1980s, however, the projects had begun to expand and attempted to actively provide black South Africans opportunities denied them by their own government. The Reagan administration, for example, concentrated on supporting embryonic black businesses. Just prior to the 1994 elections, the funding for these community projects had grown exponentially, with these programs now receiving levels of finance more usually associated with bilateral state aid programs.

In simple terms of the language used and the empowerment programs implemented, Habib's "beyond a shadow of doubt" criteria was met. Yet, a state's commitment to human rights in the external environment, if it is to be effective, demands more than just rhetoric. As with all foreign policy, words have to be backed by deeds. Habib's desire for a clear-cut historical commendation of Washington DC's approach toward apartheid was not attained because this rhetoric's effectiveness was diluted by a lack of action. When it came to tackling Pretoria, deeper analysis reveals a U.S. policy that was insufficiently engaged and too readily distracted from its human rights concerns by a pursuit of strategic and economic imperatives. An attempt to balance these three groups of interests left Washington DC fatally vulnerable to charges that its rhetoric was merely playing lip service to opposing apartheid. The small, but expanding, U.S. empowerment projects did little to deflect these charges of expediency. Continued strategic

and economic engagement left many critics believing that Washington DC was content to perpetuate the status quo in South Africa.

The U.S. Record on Apartheid: Strategic Interests

As indicated in chapter one of this study, an absence of apartheid would have resulted in a close strategic relationship between the United States and South Africa during the Cold War. Pretoria shared Washington DC's ideological outlook, and was willing to play its part militarily in defending the free world. The Republic was also of special interest due to its location on the Cape sea route, and because of its reserves of strategic minerals. As a consequence, contacts between the military establishments of the two countries, at least initially, were close, and Truman and Eisenhower helped rearm South Africa after World War II.

Pretoria, however, was deemed only useful, not vital, to the Cold War prospects of the United States. Both Kennedy's and Johnson's national security advisors indicated that although strategic contacts with this country should not be idly squandered, neither was the Republic important enough to warrant Washington DC compromising its political stance on apartheid. The Republic was expendable. Consequently, the 1963 decision to impose an arms embargo was made.

This arms ban was enforced under law, and gradually tightened as time went by. Significant additional measures included the banning of U.S. naval vessels calling at South African ports, the prohibition of contacts between higher-ranking officers of the two countries, U.S. support for the voluntary to mandatory status change of the U.N. arms embargo, and limiting the sale of nonlethal materials to the Republic's military and police. In terms of core strategic relations between the United States and South Africa, again Washington DC registered an ongoing protest against apartheid by maintaining this embargo for over 30 years.

Yet, despite this arms embargo being the most effective of all the sanctions Western states imposed against South Africa, it failed to meet Habib's "beyond a shadow of doubt" criteria. This was because the political impact of this embargo was diluted by decisions taken at the periphery of this policy. The ban's symbolism was continually undermined, whether this was by Kennedy's procrastination over the sale of "international defense" weapons, the submarine indecision in particular; NASA's myopic bureaucratic defense of its tracking stations, being apparently oblivious to wider concerns over apartheid; continued clandestine meetings, rumored or otherwise, between the countries' respective military and intelligence communities; the willingness to maintain cooperation in the nuclear field; or the use of gray area military/civilian equipment sales as positive sanctions. Both the Johnson and Carter administrations attempted to replenish the stature of the U.S. arms ban by tightening the regulations governing this embargo, but the overall battle was lost.

In reality, the United States *had* sacrificed its core strategic interests in this part of the world. Despite this, the arms embargo was successfully portrayed by the antiapartheid movement as only being grudging in nature, slipshod in its implementation, and weak at its fringes. Conservative agencies within successive

administrations were often guilty of the first charge, but it was the above lapses of rigidity at the embargo's periphery that did most to undermine the political value of the U.S. arms ban.

The U.S. Record on Apartheid: Economic Interests

Ultimately, however, Habib's desire for an uncontested positive historical assessment of the U.S. approach toward apartheid was frustrated by continued economic links between the United States and South Africa. All U.S. administrations, from Truman to Bush, opposed economic sanctions. Action of this nature therefore only became a reality when the U.S. Congress intervened and imposed punitive measures in the mid-1980s, overriding the Reagan executive's veto in the process. The United States was thus at odds with the majority opinion for the bulk of the apartheid era. Internationally, most states advocated an economic embargo from the 1950s onward. Likewise, as time progressed, official U.S. policy also ran counter to majority elite opinion back home in the United States. It was irrelevant whether these wider demands for punitive action were made on the back of rigorous analysis, expediency, or merely as a manner of expressing relatively uniformed indignation over Pretoria's behavior. As much as executive officials complained that most opposition stemmed from these latter two categories, the call for sanctions still proved to be a powerful rallying position. Washington DC's subtler and less decisive, but purportedly more realistic, antiapartheid strategy suffered by comparison.

Any credit Washington DC did receive for rhetorically castigating apartheid or by maintaining the arms embargo became overshadowed by its obstruction of the will of the majority. Most obviously this obstruction manifested itself through a succession of vetoes cast in the U.N. Security Council to prevent economic sanctions. This negative stance made it easy for critics to portray the United States as supporting the minority rule in South Africa. U.S. corporations, after all, benefited significantly from the apartheid economy, making profits in this market all the way into the 1980s.

From the Johnson years onward, the U.S. executive did put up a counterargument to punitive sanctions. It was reasoned that economic engagement would help eradicate apartheid quicker than bans or embargoes. This was because ultimately it would be capitalism that would reform apartheid. White political leaders would come to realize that a modern economy could not function on a framework of racial separation, therefore political pressure would gradually be placed on Pretoria to move toward majority rule. In the meantime, U.S. corporations should remain in the Republic to act as role models for their South African counterparts.

The antiapartheid movement, however, never accepted this strategy. Being so long-term in its ambition and lacking a decisive act, it could not compete with the simplicity of the call for immediate punitive sanctions. The result was a rejection of the pro-economic engagement argument, evidenced by the passage of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act in 1986.

A policy rejected both by the international community and overturned politically at home would be an unlikely candidate to receive Habib's uncontested positive historical assessment.

The U.S. Record on Apartheid: Incomplete Strategies

Given Washington DC's disadvantage in the domestic sanctions debate and its minority position in terms of world opinion, it was up to the United States to prove the worth of its alternative South Africa strategy via action and not just words. If Washington DC was to block the efforts of the majority, the onus was now on U.S. officials to forge a way forward. Deeds were required to prompt reforms from Pretoria, to maintain a supportive constituency for policy at home, and to nullify the pro-sanctions pressures emanating from the international community. In short, the United States had to commit time and resources to contend with apartheid. This did not always happen.

The Cold War dominated the period under consideration. Therefore, whether primacy was awarded to Korea, South East Asia, the Middle East, or East-West diplomacy generally, South Africa, apart from the interest generated by uprisings in the mid-1970s and mid-1980s, was always low in Washington DC's hierarchy of foreign policy concerns. Senior decision makers rarely considered the issue of apartheid. With more urgent priorities pressing, as these officials saw it, it was easier just to rely on rhetoric and the arms embargo. Once again, this lack of attention made it easy for opponents to portray the United States as content to support the status quo in South Africa.

Twice, respectively during the Nixon/Ford and Reagan years, the U.S. government did take time to formulate a more comprehensive counterstrategy. Both these South Africa policies were based on positive sanctions. The idea was that friendly persuasion was a more realistic way to encourage reform. Punitive measures would not work, but limited leverage may be generated by cooperation with the South African government. At the same time, contacts would be built with the Republic's black community and the Frontline States enabling U.S. influence to bring the two parties together.

Yet, in both cases, these positive sanctions were never adequately implemented. The Nixon and Ford administrations through a lack of engagement allowed their Communication policy to slip into a tacit acceptance of white minority rule, while Reagan's Constructive Engagement, although more involved, never got beyond trying to court an unresponsive government in Pretoria. The consequence was a failure to develop meaningful contacts with the Republic's black opposition. In both cases a price was paid for this inattention. Ford had to contend with twenty thousand Cuban troops camped in Angola, while Reagan had his South African policy overturned by the U.S. Congress.

One administration that cannot be charged with inactivity with respect to apartheid, at least in its first year, was the Carter executive. The United States very much challenged Pretoria under this president. The rhetoric was scathing, Andy Young built respect amongst African states, and ultimatums, albeit fairly vague in specification, were delivered. Yet, Carter's policy too failed to net significant results. This administration threw everything it could at Pretoria via rhetoric and the arms embargo, but it was not prepared to impose punitive economic sanctions. Carter's confrontational approach had distinct limits.

In the final analysis, whether basing its strategy on positive or negative sanctions, no U.S. administration during the apartheid years was prepared to take either approach to its logical conclusion. Instead, each president held back and attempted to balance the conflicting strategic, economic, and human rights interests. Nixon, Ford, and Reagan, although willing to associate themselves with Pretoria to a considerable degree, were hemmed in by human rights concerns, whilst Johnson and Carter went only so far down the confrontational route, fearful of damaging U.S. economic interests. Trapped by this impossible balancing act, the United States could offer no realistic alternative to the punitive sanctions it rejected. As a consequence, U.S. policy eventually succumbed to the township uprisings of the mid-1980s, with Congress imposing the will of U.S. elite opinion.

The Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 largely released the Reagan, Bush, and Clinton administrations from the straitjacket of interest balancing. Consequently, U.S. policy toward apartheid South Africa was at its most productive after October 1986. Contacts were forged with the Republic's black opposition, a dialogue maintained with the National Party government, and limited mediation achieved. Plainly, most of the successes of this latter period only came as a result of Pretoria itself opening doors to the possibility of a nonracial democratic South Africa, but with economic and strategic concerns less prominent in U.S. thinking as a result of the CAAA, U.S. officials now had much more room to maneuver. These opportunities were taken up, and, finally, a productive balance of U.S. interests found. Consequently the historical judgment of U.S. policy toward South Africa in these post-CAAA years would be much more to Undersecretary Habib's liking.

NOTES

The following abbreviations have been used in the references below.

U.S. Presidential Libraries and National Archives

CIA-FOIA	Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Document Collection, http://www.foia.cia.gov/
DDEL	Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, Kansas
GRFL	Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan
HSTL	Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Missouri
JCL	Jimmy Carter Library, Atlanta, Georgia
JFKL	John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, Massachusetts
LBJL	Lyndon B. Johnson Library, Austin, Texas
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration II, College Park, Maryland
NPMP	Nixon Presidential Materials Project (archived at NARA)
NSAF	National Security Adviser's Files (archived at the GRFL)
NSF	National Security File(s) (archived at the JFKL or the LBJL)
RG59	Record Group 59—Department of State (archived at NARA)
DoS-FOIA	Department of State Freedom of Information Act Document Collection, http://foia.state.gov/SearchColls/CollsSearch.asp
WHCF	White House Central Files (archived at the HSTL or the JCL)

U.S. Government Publications

DSB	<i>Department of State Bulletin</i>
DSD	<i>U.S. Department of State Dispatch</i>
FRUS	<i>Foreign Relations of the United States</i>
UST	<i>United States Treaties and Other International Agreements</i>

Preface and Acknowledgments

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Introduction

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77. Cable, Smith to Embassy-Pretoria, 7 December 1953. *FRUS, 1952–1954*. XI(i). 1027.
78. U.N. General Assembly resolution 917(X), 6 December 1955; 1016(XI), 30 January 1957; and 1178(XII), 26 November 1957.
79. Statement of George McGregor Harrison before the U.N. Special Political Committee, 16 October 1958. *DSB*. 1958, 39(1013), 843.
80. U.N. General Assembly resolutions 1248(XIII), 30 October 1958 and 1375(XIV), 17 November 1959.
81. U.N. General Assembly resolution 1460(XIV), 10 December 1959.
82. Banning orders, used regularly throughout the apartheid era, were issued by the South African government to restrict an individual's rights of speech and association.
83. Statement of Henry Cabot Lodge before the U.N. Security Council, 1 April 1960. *DSB*. 1960, 42(1087), 668 and 669.
84. U.N. General Assembly resolution 1568(XV), 18 December 1960.
85. Department of State press briefing, 22 March 1960. Department of State. Bureau of Public Affairs. Office of the Historian. *FRUS, 1958–1960*. XIV. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1989. 741.
86. Memo of conversation, Eisenhower, Herter, Dulles, and Goodpaster, 24 March 1960. 1960 (March–May) (2). State Department Subseries: Box 4. White House Office: Office of the Staff Secretary. DDEL. The president commented that the bureau chief who let the statement be released to the press would be removed from his post, if this were his decision. Ibid. For two other examples of Herter's displeasure toward this statement, see memo, Herter to Berding, 24 March 1960. March 1960 (1). Chronological File. Christian A. Herter Papers: Box 8. DDEL; and memo of telephone conversation, President Eisenhower and Herter, 24 March 1960. CAH Telephone Calls 1/1/60 to 3/25/60 (1). Telephone Calls. Christian A. Herter Papers: Box 12. DDEL.
87. Memo of telephone conversation, President Eisenhower and Herter, 30 March 1960. Presidential Telephone Calls 1–6/60 (2). Telephone Calls. Christian A. Herter Papers: Box 10. DDEL; and the White House record of this same call: Telephone Calls March 1960. DDE Diary Series: Box 48. Ann Whitman File. DDEL.
88. Cable, Crowe to State, 25 March 1960. 745A.00/3–2560. Central Decimal File. RG59–NARA.
89. Letter, Hare to Williams, 19 August 1960. *FRUS, 1958–1960*. XIV. 755–756; and *Union of South Africa: tracking stations*, 13 September 1960. *UST*. 1960, 11(2), 2052–2057.

3 The Kennedy Administration

1. For such an interpretation of Kennedy's South Africa policy, see, for example, Arthur Gavshon, *Crisis in Africa: battleground of East and West*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981. 153; James N. Giglio, *The presidency of John F. Kennedy*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1991. 230; and Helen E. Purkitt, A problem-centered approach for understanding foreign policy: some examples from U.S. foreign policy toward southern Africa. In Stuart S. Nagel, ed. *Handbook of global international policy*. New York: Marcel Dekker, 2000.
2. This revisionist interpretation builds upon the work of Thomas J. Noer, *Cold War and black liberation: the United States and white rule in Africa, 1948–1968*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1985.
3. *Guidelines for U.S. policy toward the Republic of South Africa*. 2. Enclosure to memo, Belk to Rostow, 3 August 1961. Document 1a. Africa General: 8/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF-JFKL.
4. Address of Senator John F. Kennedy before the Democratic Party national convention, Los Angeles, 15 July 1960. <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Historical+Resources/Archives/Reference+Desk/Speeches/JFK/JFK+Pre-Pres/Address+of+Senator+John+F.+Kennedy+Accepting+the+Democratic+Party+Nomination+for+the+Presidency+of+t.htm> [Accessed: 6 April 2007].
5. President John F. Kennedy's radio and television report to the American people on civil rights, Washington DC, 11 June 1963. <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Historical+Resources/Archives/Reference+Desk/Speeches/JFK/003POF03CivilRights06111963.htm> [Accessed: 6 April 2007].
6. Memo, Williams to Rusk, 12 June 1963. Document 7a. Africa, 6/3/63–6/24/63. Subject File. White House Files: Box WH-1. Arthur M. Schlesinger Papers. JFKL.
7. Inaugural address of President John F. Kennedy, Washington DC, 20 January 1961. <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Historical+Resources/Archives/Reference+Desk/Speeches/JFK/003POF03Inaugural01201961.htm> [Accessed: 11 April 2007].
8. Ibid.
9. Cable, Rusk to Embassy-South Africa, 25 October 1961. Document 7. Africa General: 9/29/61–10/31/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF-JFKL; and Satterthwaite to State, 13 September 1962. Document 37. Africa General: 11/62–12/62. Countries: Box 3. NSF-JFKL.
10. Chester Bowles, *Africa's challenge to America*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1956. 96–97.
11. The reaction to Mennen Williams' comments generated by the minority governments of southern Africa and in the international press forced the assistant secretary to subsequently clarify the U.S. position. Williams stated that by "Africans" he meant all those who lived on the continent, irrespective of their race. See memo, Duggan to Rusk, 26 February 1961. Document 7. Africa General, 2/1/61–3/20/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF-JFKL; Mennen G. Williams, *Africa for the Africans*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1969. 141; and Thomas J. Noer, *Soapy: a biography of G. Mennen Williams*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005. 239–240. President Kennedy, himself responding to questions about the incident, told a press conference: "The statement of 'Africa for the Africans' does not seem to me to be a very unreasonable statement . . . I do not know who else Africa should be for." President John F. Kennedy news conference, Washington, DC, 1 March 1961. <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Historical+Resources/>

- Archives/Reference+Desk/Press+Conferences/003POF05Pressconference5_03 011961.htm [Accessed: 4 July 2007].
12. Senator J.F. Kennedy's speech before the U.S. Senate, Washington DC, 2 July 1957. Imperialism—the enemy of freedom. *Congressional Record*. 1957, 103(8), 10781.
 13. *Ibid*. 10783.
 14. Address of George Mennen Williams before the Overseas Press Club, New York, 31 October 1961. *DSB*. 1961, 45(1170), 888; and statement of Jonathan B. Bingham before Committee IV of the U.N. General Assembly, 13 March 1961. *DSB*. 1961, 44(1138), 570.
 15. Bingham. *Ibid*. 569; and statement of Sidney R. Yates before Committee IV of the U.N. General Assembly, 30 October 1963. *DSB*. 1963, 49(1277), 946.
 16. General Assembly resolutions 1663(XVI), 28 November 1961, and 1881(XVIII), 11 October 1963.
 17. Statement of Francis T.P. Plimpton before the U.N. General Assembly Special Political Committee, 19 October 1962. *DSB*. 1962, 47(1221), 791. Original emphasis.
 18. The telegram read, in part, “This high recognition of your past and continuing efforts in the cause of justice and the advancement through peaceful means of the brotherhood of man is applauded by free men everywhere. Please accept my best wishes for your continued health and well-being.” Enclosure to memo, Battle to Bundy, 13 November 1961. Document 2a. South Africa, Republic of, 1961. Countries: Box 124. President's Office Files. JFKL.
 19. Memo, Belk to Bundy, 3 November 1961. Document 1 and enclosures. Africa General, 11/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF-JFKL. See also Christian M. De Vos, Balancing acts: John Kennedy, the Cold War and the African National Congress. *Politikon*. 2005, 32(1), 108–109.
 20. Statement of Francis T.P. Plimpton before the U.N. General Assembly Special Political Committee, 19 October 1962. *DSB*. 1962, 47(1221), 791.
 21. De Vos. *Politikon*. 113.
 22. Cable, Rusk to Embassy-Pretoria, 25 October 1961. Document 7. Africa General: 9/29/61–10/31/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF-JFKL; and memo of conversation, Rusk and Louw. Enclosure to cable, State to Embassy-South Africa, 25 October 1961. U.S. Department of State. Bureau of Public Affairs. Office of the Historian. *FRUS, 1961–1963: Africa*. XXI. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1995. Document 391. In a later letter to Senator Fulbright, Undersecretary of State George Ball suggested that there had been no objection raised by embassy staff to this reception. Ball was responding to a complaint, apparently originating from an embassy employee, relayed by Fulbright, angry that the reception had been “forced” on the embassy by Washington DC. Letter, Fulbright to Ball, 23 July 1964, and Letter, Ball to Fulbright, 29 July 1964. Documents 13a, 13b, and 13c. “B” [Bill Brubeck]. Files of McGeorge Bundy: Box 15. NSF-LBJL.
 23. Cable, Embassy-Cape Town to State, 10 June 1963. *FRUS, 1961–1963*. XXI. Document 405.
 24. Cable, Satterthwaite to State, 5 July 1963. *FRUS, 1961–1963*. XXI. Document 405n; and July 4 snub to U.S. aide by South Africa is seen. *New York Times*. 5 July 1963. 3. See also Rusk's account of how the United States nearly broke diplomatic relations with South Africa over Pretoria's refusal to accept African-American Foreign Service officers in South Africa. Dean Rusk, *As I saw it: a Secretary of State's memoirs*. London: I.B. Tauris, 1991. 524.

25. Statement of Adlai E. Stevenson before the U.N. Security Council, 2 August 1963. *DSB*. 1963, 49(1261), 335.
26. *Ibid.* 334 and 336.
27. Memo, Cleveland and Williams to Rusk, 3 October 1962. Document 6a. Africa General: 8/62–10/62. Countries: Box 2A. NSF-JFKL.
28. Memo, Stevenson to Department of State. 23 January 1963. Document 2. Africa General: 1/63–2/63. Countries: Box 3. NSF-JFKL.
29. Memo, Williams to Rusk, 12 June 1963. Document 7a. Africa, 6/3/63–6/24/63. Subject File. White House Files: Box WH-1. Arthur M. Schlesinger Papers. JFKL.
30. Memo, Williams to Rusk, 12 July 1963. George Mennen Williams Papers: Box 3. NARA.
31. Memo, Rusk to Harriman, 15 June 1963. Document 7. Africa, 6/3/63–6/24/63. Subject File. White House Files: Box WH-1. Arthur M. Schlesinger Papers. FKL.
32. *Country internal defense plan*. 10 17. Enclosure to Satterthwaite to State, 13 September 1962. Document 37. Africa General: 11/62–12/62. Countries: Box 3. NSF-JFKL.
33. Letter, McNamara to Rusk, 11 July 1963. Facsimile published in: Kenneth Mokoena, ed. *South Africa and the United States: the declassified history*. New York: National Security Archive, 1993. Document 4.
34. Schlesinger, Arthur M. *A thousand days: John F. Kennedy in the White House*. New York: Fawcett Premier, 1966. 536–537.
35. Memo, Joint Chiefs of Staff to McNamara, 10 July 1963. Document 6b. South Africa, General: 6/6/63–7/12/63. Countries: Box 159. NSF-JFKL.
36. Memo, Schlesinger to Robert F. Kennedy, 1 July 1963. Document 1. Africa General: 7/1/63–7/9/63. White House Files: Box WH1. Schlesinger Papers. JFKL.
37. Arthur Schlesinger's account of the 18 July 1963 cabinet meeting. Schlesinger. *A thousand days*. 537.
38. U.N. Security Council resolution 181(1963), 7 August 1963.
39. Statement of Adlai E. Stevenson before the U.N. Security Council, 2 August 1963. *DSB*. 1963, 49(1261), 336. See also statement of Charles W. Yost before the U.N. Security Council, 7 August 1963. *DSB*. 1963, 49(1261), 337–338.
40. Stevenson statement. *Ibid.* 336. See also enclosures to memo, Brubeck to Smith, 7 August 1963. Document 2. South Africa-General, 8/7/63–8/12/63. Countries: Box 159. NSF-JFKL.
41. Statement of Charles W. Yost before the U.N. Security Council, 7 August 1963. *DSB*. 1963, 49(1261), 337.
42. For an example of the United States privately expressing concern over South Africa's apartheid policies, see cable, Rusk to Embassy-Pretoria, 25 August 1961. Document 6. Africa General: 8/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF-JFKL. For the earlier dual approach see memo of conversation, U.S./U.K. Talks—Summary Minutes: South Africa, 20 November 1961. 611.41/11–2061. Central Decimal File. RG59–NARA.
43. *Country internal defense plan*. 11–12. Enclosure to memo, Satterthwaite to State, 13 September 1962. Document 37. Africa General: 11/62–12/62. Countries: Box 3. NSF-JFKL. Additional documents pointing to this dual strategy being pursued throughout the entire period of the Kennedy Administration can be found in *Guidelines for U.S. policy toward the Republic of South Africa*. Enclosure to memo, Belk

- to Rostow, 3 August 1961. Document 1a. Africa General: 8/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF-JFKL; cable, Rusk to Embassy – Pretoria, 25 August 1961. Document 6. Africa General: 8/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF-JFKL; and cable, Satterthwaite to State, 6 September 1961. Document 1. Africa General, 9/1/61–9/10/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF-JFKL.
44. Cable, Rusk to Embassy–Pretoria, 25 October 1961. Document 7. Africa General: 9/29/61–10/31/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF-JFKL.
 45. Senator J.F. Kennedy's speech before the U.S. Senate, Washington DC, 2 July 1957. *Congressional Record*. 1957, 103(8), 10781.
 46. U.N. General Assembly resolution 1761(XVII), 6 November 1962.
 47. Statement of Francis T.P. Plimpton before the U.N. General Assembly Special Political Committee, 19 October 1962. *DSB*. 1962, 47(1221), 794.
 48. The 1963 voluntary arms embargo was, however, made mandatory in 1977 following U.N. Security Council resolution 418(1977), 4 November 1977.
 49. A fifth argument was used in the specific case of South Africa's administration of South West Africa. The United States consistently refused to take any action, including the imposition of punitive sanctions, in advance of a ruling from the International Court of Justice. See, for example, the statement of Jonathan B. Bingham before the Special Committee on the Situation With Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, 6 September 1962. *DSB*. 1962, 47(1215), 537; memo of conversation, Stevens, Wright, Maud, et al., 5 December 1962. Enclosure one to London Airgram No. A-1363. Document 35. Africa General: 11/62–12/62. Countries: Box 3. NSF-JFKL; and statement of Sidney R. Yates before Committee IV of the U.N. General Assembly, 30 October 1963. *DSB*. 1963, 49(1277), 947.
 50. Cable, Satterthwaite to State, 18 December 1962. Cited in De Vos. *Politikon*. 107.
 51. *Country internal defense plan*. 13. Enclosure to cable, Satterthwaite to State, 18 September 1962. Document 37. Africa General: 11/62–12/62. Countries: Box 3. NSF-JFKL.
 52. Memo, Naudé to Louw, 24 July 1963. Box 1/33/3. Department of Foreign Affairs archive, Union Buildings, Pretoria. Cited in De Vos. *Politikon*. 112.
 53. Cited in De Vos. *Ibid*. 115.
 54. Cable, Satterthwaite to State, 4 December 1962. Document 6. Africa General: 11/62–12/62. Countries: Box 3. NSF-JFKL.
 55. Statement of Jonathan B. Bingham before Committee IV of the U.N. General Assembly, 13 March 1961. *DSB*. 1961, 44(1138), 571.
 56. Statement of Francis T.P. Plimpton before the U.N. General Assembly Special Political Committee, 19 October 1962. *DSB*. 1962, 47(1221), 793. Officials in Washington DC had also been served notice by their colleagues in London that the United Kingdom would veto any U.N. Security Council resolution attempting to place punitive sanctions on South Africa. See memo of conversation, President J.F. Kennedy, Lord Home, et al., 4 October 1963. POL-1 S AFR. Central Subject-Numeric File. RG59-NARA.
 57. Statement of Francis T.P. Plimpton before the U.N. General Assembly Special Political Committee, 5 April 1961. *DSB*. 1961, 44(1139), 603.
 58. Statement of Francis T.P. Plimpton before the U.N. General Assembly Special Political Committee, 30 March 1961. *DSB*. 1961, 44(1139), 602.
 59. Statement of Adlai E. Stevenson before the U.N. Security Council, 2 August 1963. *DSB*. 1963, 49(1261), 336.
 60. *Guidelines for U.S. policy toward the Republic of South Africa*. 5. Enclosure to memo, Belk to Rostow, 3 August 1961. Document 1a. Africa General: 8/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF-JFKL.

61. Davenport, Rodney and Christopher Saunders. *South Africa: a modern history*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000. 415.
62. Hull. *American enterprise in South Africa*. 246; South African invader. *Time* (New York). 27 January 1961. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,826828,00.html> [Accessed: 27 June 2007].
63. Hull. *American enterprise in South Africa*. 246.
64. *Ibid.* 247.
65. Cable, Rusk to Embassy-Pretoria, 25 October 1961. Document 7. Africa General: 9/29/61–10/31/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF-JFKL.
66. These facilities were, namely: NASA's Deep Space Instrumentation Facility near Johannesburg; the Department of Defense's missile and space tracking station at Grootfontein; the Minitrack Data Acquisition Station also near Johannesburg; and the Baker Nunn optical tracking station at Olifontfontein. See Briefing for NSC standing group, 10 March 1964. 11–12. Document 61. Africa, Union of South Africa: Vol. I (11/63–10/64). Country File: Box 78. NSF-LBJL.
67. Memo, Bowles to Bundy, 21 September 1961. Document 3. Africa General, 9/11/61–9/28/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF-JFKL; and memo, Rusk to Embassy-South Africa, 20 February 1962. *FRUS, 1961–1963*. XXI. Document 394. See also folder Tracking station, 1961. Bureau of African Affairs, Office of Eastern and Southern African Affairs. Country File: Box 2. Lot Files. RG59-NARA.
68. Memo, Wiesner to Bundy, 18 October 1961. Document 4. Africa General: 9/29/61–10/31/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF-JFKL.
69. Memo, Rusk to Embassy-South Africa, 20 February 1962. *FRUS, 1961–1963*. XXI. Document 394.
70. By way of insurance, however, parallel action was also sanctioned to develop an alternative seaborne tracking system for this part of the world, with the contract being renewed only for a further two years. Letter, Bowles to Gilpatric, 30 June 1961. *FRUS, 1961–1963*. XXI. Document 383.
71. Undersecretary George W. Ball referred to these weapons sales as being a “quid pro quo” for continued use of the tracking stations. Telephone conversation, Chayes and Ball, 12 July 1963. South Africa 7/27/61–12/31/63. George W. Ball Papers: Box 7. JFKL. Also see recollection of Arthur Schlesinger, Assistant to the President for Latin American Affairs. Schlesinger. *A thousand days*. 536.
72. Letter, Stevenson to Rusk, 2 June 1961. 770X.56311/6–261. Central Decimal File. RG59-NARA.
73. Memo, Wiesner to Bundy, 18 October 1961. Document 4. Africa General: 9/29/61–10/31/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF-JFKL.
74. Letter, Bowles to Gilpatric, 30 June 1961. *FRUS, 1961–1963*. XXI. Document 383. This memo also documented that the Kennedy administration sought “to avoid giving Lockheed a final decision in this matter until our negotiations with South Africa for an extension of existing arrangements on the missile tracking facilities are complete.”
75. Memo, Rusk to Embassy-South Africa, 20 February 1962. *FRUS, 1961–1963*. XXI. Document 394. See also cable, Satterthwaite to State, 27 February 1962. Document 9. Africa General, 12/61–2/62. Countries: Box 2A. NSF-JFKL. Pretoria, disappointed, suggested that the United States could be more forthcoming with further military sales, in addition to these missiles. Memo, Satterthwaite to State, 9 March 1962. Document 2. Africa General, 3/62–4/62. Countries: Box 2A. NSF-JFKL. With respect to the atomic energy agreement see memo, President

- Kennedy to Seaborg, 24 May 1962. AT3–1/CO320 (South Africa). Subject File: Atomic Energy. White House Central Files: Box 11. JFKL.
76. Memo, Naudé to Louw, 26 June 1963. Box 1/33/3. Department of Foreign Affairs archive, Union Buildings, Pretoria. Cited in De Vos. *Politikon*. 117.
 77. Joseph Albright and Marcia Kunstel, Ex-official tells U.S. “coup” to aid S. Africa. *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. 10 June 1990. A1.
 78. Memo, Williams to Johnson, 10 January 1963. DEF4–Collective defense pacts. Country Files: Box 3 Bureau of African Affairs, Office of Eastern and Southern African Affairs. Lot Files. RG59–NARA; and memo, Bundy to Gilpatric, 7 June 1961. *FRUS, 1961–1963*. XXI. Document 382.
 79. Memo, Rusk to President Kennedy, 16 March 1963. Document 7a. Africa General: 3/63. Countries: Box 3. NSF–JFKL.
 80. Memo, Kaysen to Rusk, 22 March 1963. Africa General: 3/63. Document 7. Countries: Box 3. NSF–JFKL; and telephone conversation, Kaysen and Ball, 18 March 1963. South Africa 7/27/61–12/31/63. George W. Ball Papers: Box 7. JFKL.
 81. Stevenson to State, 13 September 1963. Document 2. South Africa General, 9/12/63–9/17/63. Countries: Box 159. NSF–JFKL. See also memo, Belk to Bundy, 29 August 1963. Document 6 and enclosures. South Africa General, 8/13/63–9/11/63. Countries: Box 159. NSF–JFKL; and memo, Rusk and McNamara to President Kennedy, 16 September 1963. Document 5a. South Africa General, 9/12/63–9/17/63. Countries: Box 159. NSF–JFKL.
 82. Martin, John Bartlow, *Adlai Stevenson and the world*. Garden City: Anchor, 1978, 771.
 83. Bundy to Rusk and McNamara, 23 September 1963. Document 4. South Africa General, 9/18/63–9/29/63. Countries: Box 159. NSF–JFKL.
 84. Memo, President Kennedy to Rusk, 7 November 1963. Document 15. South Africa: 9/63–11/63. William H. Brubeck: Box 387A. NSF–JFKL.
 85. *Guidelines for U.S. policy toward the Republic of South Africa*. 4. Enclosure to Memo, Belk to Rostow, 3 August 1961. Document 1a. Africa General: 8/61. Countries: Box 2. NSF–JFKL.
 86. Memo, Brubeck to Bundy, 29 October 1963. Document 10. South Africa General: 9/30/63–10/29/63. Countries: Box 159. NSF–JFKL.

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1. David A. Dickson, *United States foreign policy towards Sub-Saharan Africa*. Lanham: University Press of America, 1985. 59.
2. Gavshon, *Crisis in Africa*. 154.
3. Remarks of President Lyndon B. Johnson at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 22 May 1964. <http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/speeches.hom/640522.asp> [Accessed: 12 August 2007].
4. Message of President Lyndon B. Johnson to the U.S. Congress, Washington DC, 15 March 1965. <http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/speeches.hom/650315.asp> [Accessed: 16 July 2007].
5. Memo, Komer and Haynes to Bundy, 10 March 1965. Africa-General: Vol I (2/64–6/64). Country File: Box 76. NSF–LBJL.
6. Joseph Palmer considered there to have been no downgrading of Africa policy following the death of President John F. Kennedy. Joseph Palmer, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (1966 to 1969), interviewed by Paige Mulholland, Washington DC, 8 January 1969. 6 Oral history transcripts, LBJL.

7. Remarks of President Lyndon B. Johnson at a reception marking the third anniversary of the Organization of African Unity, Washington DC, 26 May 1966. <http://www.presidency.ucs.edu/ws/index.php?pid=27619> [Accessed: 17 July 2007].
8. For an itinerary of Senator Robert Kennedy's trip to South Africa, see <http://www.rfksa.org/documents/pdf/9.pdf> [Accessed: 1 August 2007].
9. CIA. *The liberation movements of southern Africa* (National Intelligence Estimate 70-1-67). 24 November 1967. 1. CIA-FOIA. [Accessed: 12 August 2007].
10. *Briefing for NSC standing group*. 10 March 1964. 2. Document 61 Africa, Union of South: Vol. I (11/63-10/64). Country File: Box 78. NSF-LBJL.
11. Ibid. 16.
12. Application instigating proceedings, 4 November 1960. *South West Africa (Ethiopia v. South Africa)*. <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/46/9261.pdf> [Accessed: 1 August 2007].
13. See, for example, *Summary notes of the 561st meeting of the National Security Council*, 14 July 1966. Vol. 3, tab 43, Southwest Africa, 7/14/66. NSC Meetings: Box 2. NSF-LBJL.
14. *Briefing for NSC Standing group: Summary* 10 March 1964. 1. Document 61. Africa, Union of South: Vol. I (11/63-10/64). Country File: Box 78. NSF-LBJL.
15. *Briefing for NSC standing group: Summary*. 10 March 1964. 1-2. Document 61, Africa, Union of South: Vol. I (11/63-10/64). Country File: Box 78. NSF-LBJL; and memo, Bundy to President Johnson, 20 April 1964. NSAM 295. National Security Action Memorandums: Box 4. NSF-LBJL.
16. National Security Action Memorandum 295, *U.S. policy toward South Africa*, 24 April 1964. Document 15. NSAM 295. National Security Action Memorandums: Box 4. NSF-LBJL.
17. Statement of G. Mennen Williams before the House Subcommittee on Africa, 1 March 1966. U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Africa. *United States-South African relations: hearings...* [89th Congress, 2nd session: part one—March 1966]. Washington DC: GPO, 1966. 5 and 6.
18. Statement of Adlai E. Stevenson before the U.N. Security Council, 16 June 1964. DSB. 1964, 51(1306), 30; statement of Adlai E. Stevenson before the U.N. Security Council, 4 December 1963. DSB. 1964, 50(1282), 94; and Address of G. Mennen Williams before Williams College, Williamstown, 18 March 1965. DSB. 1965, 52(1346), 543. Original emphasis.
19. Address of Hubert Humphrey before the Organization of African Unity, Addis Ababa, 6 January 1968. Document 16. Africa—The vice president's report to the president on his nine-nation African visit: 12/29/67-1/11/68. Country File: Box 77. NSF-LBJL.
20. Letter, Brubeck to Bundy, 29 July 1964. Document 13 and enclosures. "B" [Bill Brubeck]. Files of McGeorge Bundy: Box 15. NSF-LBJL; cable, Satterthwaite to State, 5 May 1965. DEF7 S AFR-US. Central Subject-Numeric File. RG59-NARA; cable, Rusk to Embassy-Pretoria, 23 November 1964. Document 26. Africa, Union of South Vol. II (11/64-9/66). Country File: Box 78. NSF-LBJL; and U.S. judge observes trial in South Africa. *New York Times*. 29 April 1964. 9.
21. Memo, Read to Bundy, 20 May 1964. Document 40. Africa, Union of South Vol. I (11/63-10/64). Country File: Box 78. NSF-LBJL. The United States abstained in the vote on U.N. Security Council resolution 190(1964), of 9 June 1964, which sought the termination of the Rivonia trial.

22. Cable, Rusk to Embassy-Pretoria, 5 December 1963. Document 34. Africa, Union of South: Vol. I (11/63–10/64). Country File: Box 78. NSF-LBJL; and memo, Brubeck to Bundy, 5 December 1963. Document 62. Africa, Union of South: Vol. I (11/63–10/64). Country File: Box 78. NSF-LBJL.
23. Memo, Johnson and Haynes to President Johnson, 13 July 1965. U.S. Department of State. Bureau of Public Affairs. Office of the Historian. *FRUS, 1964–1968: Africa*. XXIV. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1997. Document. 607.
24. Status report on NSAM 295, July 1965. 1. Enclosure to Memo, Read to Bundy, 31 July 1965. Document 1a. NSAM 295. National Security Action Memorandums: Box 4. NSF-LBJL.
25. The individuals concerned were William H. Witt, Patrick O'Sheel, and Argus Tresidder of the U.S. Embassy, and Consul Horace F. Byrne based in Port Elizabeth. Cable, Satterthwaite to State, 28 July 1965. POL17 US-S AFR. Central Subject-Numeric File. RG59-NARA.
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36. See, for example, Memo of conversation, Rusk, Naudé, et al., 22 April 1964. Document 96a. Africa, Union of South: Vol. I (11/63–10/64). Country File: Box 78. NSF-LBJL.
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 61. Memo, Rollefson to Williams, 9 March 1964. SP15 S AFR–US. Central Subject–Numeric File. RG59–NARA.
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 63. National Security Action Memorandum 295, *U.S. policy toward South Africa*, 24 April 1964. Document 10. NSAM 295. National Security Action Memorandums: Box 4. NSF-LBJL.
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 65. *Status Report on NSAM 295*. July 1965. 4 Enclosure to memo, Read to Bundy, 31 July 1965. Document 1a. NSAM 295. National Security Action Memorandums: Box 4. NSF-LBJL.
 66. National Security Action Memorandum 295, *U.S. policy toward South Africa*, 24 April 1964. Document 10. NSAM 295. National Security Action Memorandums: Box 4. NSF-LBJL.

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70. Memo, Komer to McNamara. 23 December 1964. Document 67. Africa, Union of South: Vol. II (11/64-9/66). Country File: Box 78. NSF-LBJL.
71. Memo, Johnson to Bundy, 23 December 1964. Document 68. Africa, Union of South: Vol. II (11/64-9/66). Country File: Box 78. NSF-LBJL; cable, Rusk to U.S. Embassy-Pretoria, 31 December 1964. Document 25. Africa, Union of South: Vol. II (11/64-9/66). Country File: Box 78. NSF-LBJL; and memo, Brubeck to Bundy, 17 August 1964. Document 52. Africa, Union of South: Vol. I (11/63-10/64). Country File: Box 78. NSF-LBJL.
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76. Statement of G. Mennen Williams before the House Subcommittee on Africa, 1 March 1966. U.S. Congress. *United States-South African relations: hearings...* [part 1]. 8. See also CIA. *Feasibility of economic sanctions against the Republic of South Africa* (RR ER 66-25). 1 November 1966. *FRUS, 1964-1968*. XXIV. Document 627.
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5 The Nixon and Ford Administrations

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 9. Charles Rangel questioning NASA's Gerald M. Truszynski, Associate Administrator for Tracking and Data Acquisition, 29 February 1972 before the House Subcommittee on Aeronautics and Space Technology. U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Science and Astronautics. Subcommittee on Aeronautics and Space Technology. *1973 NASA authorization: hearing...* [92nd Congress, 2nd session: part four, March 1972]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1972. 226–233.
 10. Rangel attempted to add an amendment to annual NASA authorization bills between 1970 and 1973. In 1973, Edward Kennedy sponsored this measure in the Senate. The proposed amendment was defeated by 104 votes to 294 in the House, and withdrawn by Kennedy in the Senate after an understanding was reached that the Committee on Aeronautical and Space Sciences would hold hearings on the tracking stations later that year. See Robert Gillette, South Africa: NASA inches out of a segregated tracking station. *Science*. 1973, 181(4097), 331–332, and 380.
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12. Edward Kennedy before the Senate Committee on Finance, 27 June 1971. U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Finance. *Sugar Act amendments of 1971: hearings...* [92nd Congress, 1st session: June 1971]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1971. 198.
13. Statement of Edward Kennedy on the floor of the Senate, 27 July 1971. *Congressional Record*. 1971, 117(21), 27509–27519.
14. For examples of conservative lobbying see Les de Villiers, *Secret information*. Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1980; Burns. Tilting toward South Africa. 8; Robert J. Janosik and Barbara E. Lawrence. Southern African pressure politics in the U.S.. *Issue*. 1974, 4(3), 76–80; and Jerry Landauer, Congressmen received gifts, job offers, trips from South Africa sugar growers. *Wall Street Journal*. 23 August 1978. 5.
15. Address by David D. Newsom, Northwestern University, Evanston, 8 December 1970. *DSB*. 1971, 64(1647), 82. In terms of conservative successes, Senator Robert Byrd of Virginia orchestrated a rider to the Armed Forces Appropriation Authorization Bill of 1971 (Section 503 of Public Law 92–156). The so-called Byrd Amendment permitted, for reasons of “national security,” the importation of chromium from Rhodesia. The United States thus joined South Africa and Portugal as the only three countries that formally broke United Nations sanctions placed on Rhodesia.
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17. The declassified Nixon National Security Study Memoranda are archived in Policy Papers: Box H-216. National Security Council Institutional Files. NPMP-NARA. The Ford administration issued a further 42 National Security Memoranda located in National Security Decision Memoranda and National Security Study Memoranda, 1974–1977: Box 2. NSAF-GRFL.
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19. NSSM39. 82.
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21. NSSM39. 84.
22. NSSM39. 84 and 104.
23. Dean Acheson, *U.S. policies toward southern Africa require change*. 20 April 1969. South Africa I: 1969–1971. Country Files for Africa. National Security Council Files: Box 744. NPMP-NARA. See also: Letter, Kissinger to Acheson, 7 May 1969. South Africa I: 1969–1971. Country Files for Africa. National Security Council Files: Box 744. NPMP-NARA.
24. NSSM39. 85.
25. Ibid.
26. NSSM39. 109.
27. Policy Planning Council. *National Policy Paper: Southern Africa*, 20 November 1968. Document 1b. South Africa 1. Files of Edward K. Hamilton: Box 3. NSF-LBJL.
28. NSSM39. 85 and 110.
29. NSSM39. 110–111.

30. Policy Planning Council. *National Policy Paper: Southern Africa*, 20 November 1968. ix. Document 1b. South Africa 1. Files of Edward K. Hamilton: Box 3. NSF-LBJL.
31. NSSM39. 111.
32. NSSM39. 105–106.
33. NSSM39. 107–8.
34. NSSM39. 106–107.
35. NSSM39. 108–109.
36. Address of David D. Newsom before the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, Chicago, 17 September 1970. *DSB*. 1970, 63(1633), 423.
37. Address by David D. Newsom at Northwestern University, Evanston, 8 December 1970. *DSB*. 1971, 64(1647), 83.
38. Address by David D. Newsom before the Atlanta Press Club, Atlanta, 21 September 1971. *DSB*. 1971, 65(1685), 377.
39. Address of Robert S. Smith before the American Society of International Law, Washington DC, 30 April 1971. *DSB*. 1971, 64(1670), 825.
40. See, for example, Clyde Ferguson and William R. Cotter. South Africa: what is to be done? *Foreign Affairs*. 1977–1978, 56(2), 254; Richard Goldstone, Ambiguity and America: South Africa and U.S. foreign policy. *Social Research*. 72(4), 815; and Dickson, *United States foreign policy towards Sub-Saharan Africa*. 76.
41. Donald B. Easum, United States policy toward South Africa. *Issue*. 1975, 5(3), 71.
42. Roger Morris, the head of the interdepartmental group drafting the NSSM39 report, suggests that option two was selected in a modified form, with David Newsom having failed to gain assurances that African states would be informed of the policy change prior to its implementation. Morris, Roger. *Uncertain greatness: Henry Kissinger and American foreign policy*. New York: Harper, 1977. 113–19. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Clyde Ferguson argued that the NSSM39 report prompted “significant changes” in policy (Ferguson interview by Dickson, 14 January 1983). Assistant Secretary Newsom himself reflected, “it is not the wording of option two which is important. It was what was done as a result of that wording. What was done as a result of that wording was very modest.” Newsom interviewed by Dickson, unspecified date. Both interviews are referred to in Dickson, *United States foreign policy towards Sub-Saharan Africa*. 77). Looking at the NSSM39 study’s option two operational examples, of those relating to South Africa, three were implemented (gray area military sales, exchange programs, discourage liberation movements), and three were not (sale of common defense equipment, resumption of naval visits, promote exports to the Republic and Namibia). The removal of Ex-Im Bank restrictions was only partially implemented, while it is debatable whether the NASA tracking stations remained for “long as [they were] required.” NSSM39. 104.
43. President Richard Nixon’s *Third annual report to the Congress on United States foreign policy*. 9 February 1972. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=3736&st=&st1=> [Accessed: 20 October 2007].
44. Testimony of Frank E. Loy before House Subcommittee on Africa, 2 April 1969. U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Africa *South Africa and United States foreign policy: hearings...* [91st Congress, 1st session: April 1969]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1969. 18.
45. Statement by John Scali before the U.N. General Assembly, 30 September 1974. *DSB*. 1974, 71(1844), 594; and statement of Charles W. Yost before the U.N. Security Council, 11 August 1969. *DSB*. 1969, 61(1577), 252.
46. See, for example, U.N. Security Council resolution 311(1972), 4 February 1972.

47. See, for example, U.N. Security Council resolutions: 264 (1969), 20 March 1969; 283 (1970), 29 July 1970; 366 (1974), 17 December 1974; and 385 (1976), 30 January 1976.
48. Statement of Charles W. Yost before the U.N. Security Council, 11 August 1969. *DSB*. 1969, 61(1577), 252.
49. See, for example, statement of William W. Scranton before U.N. General Assembly Committee IV (Trusteeship), 2 December 1976. *DSB*. 1977, 76(1960), 44.
50. Testimony of Nathaniel Davis before the House Subcommittee on International Resources, Food, and Energy, 10 June 1975. U.S. Congress. House. Committee on International Relations. Subcommittee on International Resources, Food, and Energy. *Resources in Namibia: implications for U.S. policy: hearings...* [94th Congress, 1st and 2nd Sessions: June 1975 and May 1976]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1976. 4.
51. U.N. Security Council resolution 284(1970), 29 July 1970.
52. Oral statement of John R. Stevenson before the International Court of Justice, 9 March 1971. ICJ. *Pleadings, oral arguments and document: legal consequences for states of the continued presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) notwithstanding Security Council resolution 276 (1970)*. II. The Hague: ICJ, 1970. 597–505.
53. International Court of Justice, Advisory Opinion, 21 June 1971. *Legal consequences for states of the continued presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) notwithstanding Security Council resolution 276 (1970)*. Paragraph 133. <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/53/5595.pdf> [Accessed: 22 October 2007].
54. Statement of Christopher H. Phillips before the U.N. Security Council, 12 October 1971. *DSB*. 1971, 65(1691), 608.
55. National Security Decision Memorandum 38 *United States policy toward Southern Africa*. 28 January 1970. NSDM 38. Policy Papers (1969–1974): National Security Decision Memorandums. National Security Council Institutional Files: Box H-213. NPMP-NARA.
56. National Security Study Memorandum 89. *United States Policy for South West Africa*, 12 February 1970. Study Memorandums (1969–1974): National Security Decision Memorandums. National Security Council Institutional Files: Box H-169. NPMP-NARA.
57. National Security Decision Memorandum 55 *South West Africa*, 17 April 1970. Policy Papers (1969–1974): National Security Decision Memorandums. National Security Council Institutional Files: Box H-216. NPMP-NARA.
58. U.N. Security Council resolution 283 (1970), 29 July 1970.
59. See, for example, U.N. General Assembly resolution 2678(XXV), 9 December 1970.
60. U.N. Security Council draft resolution S/11713, 6 June 1975; and U.N. Security Council draft resolution S/12211, 19 October 1976.
61. Statement of John Scali before the U.N. Security Council, 17 December 1974. *DSB*. 1975, 72(1858), 162.
62. U.N. Ambassador William Scranton, referring to the Turnhalle talks, urged Pretoria to talk to “all authentic national forces including, specifically, SWAPO.” Statement of William W. Scranton before U.N. General Assembly Committee IV (Trusteeship), 2 December 1976. *DSB*. 1977, 76(1960), 43.
63. Statement of Daniel P. Moynihan before the U.N. Security Council, 29 January 1976. *DSB*. 1976, 74(1913), 244.
64. See statement of William W. Scranton before the U.N. Security Council, 19 October 1976. *DSB*. 1976, 75(1950), 594.

65. Statement by John Scali before the U.N. Security Council, 30 October 1974. *DSB*. 1974, 71(1849), 777 and 776.
66. Memo, Taswell to Secretary for Foreign Affairs, 30 October 1970. USA Relations with South Africa, Countries, 1/33/3, Vol. 17. Archives of the South Africa Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pretoria. Cited in Eric J. Morgan, *The sin of omission: the United States and South Africa in the Nixon years*. Unpublished MA thesis. Miami University, Oxford, 2003. 136.
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68. Coker. *Constructive engagement*. 74; Thomas G. Mitchell, Native vs. settler: ethnic conflict in Israel/Palestine, Northern Ireland, and South Africa. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000. 115; and Thomas G. Karis, Revolution in the making: black politics in South Africa. *Foreign Affairs*. 1983–1984, 62(378), 400.
69. Address of Robert S. Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, before the American Society of International Law, Washington DC, 30 April 1971. *DSB*. 1971, 64(1670), 825.
70. Statement of John Scali before the U.N. Security Council, 30 October 1974. *DSB*. 1974, 71(1849), 777.
71. U.N. Security Council draft resolution S/11543, 30 October 1974. The United States also criticized the president of the General Assembly for his ad hoc banning of Pretoria's representatives from this body in 1974. See Second statement made by John Scali before the U.N. General Assembly, 12 November 1974. *DSB*. 1974, 71(1850), 813.
72. Testimony of David D. Newsom before House Subcommittee on Africa, 6 April 1973. U.S. Congress. *Implementation of U.S. arms embargo...: hearings...* 143 and 144. For charges that the Nixon and Ford administrations broke the 1963 arms embargo, see: Michael Klare and Eric Prokosch, Evading the embargo: how the U.S. arms South Africa and Rhodesia. *Issue*. 1979, 9(1–2), 42–46; and 111 and 111a: arms embargo (1971–1978). Series VIII: Resource File. Archives of the Washington Office on Africa: Box 51. Special Collections: Record Group 105. Yale Divinity School Library, New Haven.
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74. Statement of William B. Buffum before the U.N. Security Council Buffum, 23 July 1970. *DSB*. 1970, 63(1625), 204.
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88. NSDM55 had specifically ordered: "The President intends the forgoing decision be regarded as solely concerned with South West Africa. They are not to be regarded as a precedent for application of similar restrictions and policies to South Africa or the Portuguese Territories." National Security Decision Memorandum 55. *South West Africa*. 17 April 1970. NSDM 55. Policy Papers (1969–1974): National Security Decision Memorandums. National Security Council Institutional Files: Box H-216. NPMP-NARA.
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126. The Nixon administration reported that South Africa had made no application for the export of light aircraft under the new gray area regulations in the three years to April 1973. Testimony of David D. Newsom before House Subcommittee on Africa, 6 April 1973. U.S. Congress. *Implementation of the U.S. Arms embargo....: hearings...* 145.
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133. Nathaniel Davis, The Angolan decision of 1975: a personal memoir. *Foreign Affairs*. 1978, 57(1), 109–124.
134. Gleijeses' research shows the Cubans were acting independently of USSR instructions. Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959–1976*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.
135. See comments at First Extraordinary Session of the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, 10–13 January 1976; and John A. Marcum, Lessons of Angola. *Foreign Affairs*. 1976, 54(3), 418–420.
136. Military assistance to the FNLA and UNITA was terminated subsequent to the U.S. Congress passing the Tunney Amendment to the Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 1976 (Public Law 94–212). Senator Dick Clark sponsored an amendment to the International Security Assistance and Arms Exports Control Act of 1976 (Section 404 of Public Law 94–329) confirming this prohibition of military aid to Angola.

137. *Declaration on Southern Africa* adopted by the OAU at the Ninth Extraordinary Session of the Council of Ministers, Dar es Salaam, 7–10 April 1975.
138. Kissinger explained the situation to President Ford in the following terms: “Our need was to prevent the further radicalization of Africa and prevent it all from becoming a black–white issue where even the moderates would have to be against us.” Memo of conversation, President Ford, Kissinger, and Scowcroft, Washington DC, 9 May 1976. *FRUS, 1969–1976*. E-6. Document 44.
139. Kissinger told the NSC, “We have to talk to South Africa to give us a hand to bring Smith to negotiations, which have to end with majority rule and the protection of minority rights. I have a basic sympathy with the white Rhodesians but black Africa is absolutely united on this issue, and if we don’t grab the initiative we will be faced with the Soviets, and Cuban troops.” Minutes of the National Security Council meeting, Washington DC, 11 May 1976. *FRUS, 1969–1976*. E-6. Document 44.
140. Stephen S. Rosenfeld, Henry Kissinger on the U.S. and Rhodesia. *Washington Post*. 3 July 1979. A17.
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142. Memo of conversation, Kissinger, Vorster, Muller, Botha, et al., 23 June 1976. Document 5. June 23, 1976—Kissinger, South African Prime Minister Balthazar Johannes Vorster. Memoranda of conversations, 1973–1977: Box 20. NSAF-GRFL.
143. Ian Smith quoted in David Martin and Phyllis Johnson. *The struggle for Zimbabwe: the Chimurenga war*. London: Faber and Faber, 1981. 235.
144. John F. Burns, High South Africa aide bars military role in Rhodesia. *New York Times*. 14 May 1976. A4.
145. See cable, Bowdler to Kissinger, 30 September 1976. Document 10. South Africa–State Department Telegrams: From SECSTATE-NODIS (2). Presidential Country Files for Africa, 1974–1977: Box 6. NSAF-GRFL.
146. R.W. Johnson, *How long will South Africa survive?* London: Macmillan, 1977. 234–242.
147. United Nations. Centre against Apartheid. *Conference paper* 7. 1977. Cited in Coker. *Constructive engagement*. 107. The United States was the only country to abstain in the vote on U.N. General Assembly resolution 31/6/A, of 26 October 1976, which “rejected” the Transkei’s “independence.”
148. Henry Kissinger television interview, recorded 27 September 1976 (broadcast on the *Today* program, NBC-TV, 28 September 1976). *DSB*. 1976, 75(1948), 529 and 530. Undersecretary of State for Economic Affairs William Rogers likewise told the Senate Subcommittee on Africa that Vorster’s cooperation was “not secured by any trades or concessions . . . None were asked, and none were offered. There was no quid pro quo.” Testimony of William D. Rogers before the Senate Subcommittee on African Affairs, 30 September 1976. U.S. Congress. *South Africa-U.S. policy and the role of U.S. corporations: hearings*... 728–729.
149. Memo of conversation, Ford, Kissinger, and Scowcroft, 27 July 1976. Document 1. July 27, 1976—Ford, Kissinger, Scowcroft. Memoranda of conversations, 1973–1977: Box 20. NSAF-GRFL.
150. Address by Henry Kissinger before luncheon hosted by Kenneth Kaunda, Lusaka, 27 April 1976. *DSB*. 1976, 74(1927), 676–677.
151. Remarks of Henry Kissinger, news conference, Philadelphia, 31 August 1976. *DSB*. 1976, 75(1943), 358, 359 and 366; and Remarks of Henry Kissinger, news

- conference, Washington DC, 11 September 1976. DSB. 1976, 75(1945), 409. The phrase “divide and liberate” was coined by the Kennedy administration. See *Problems in Southern Africa*. 12. Enclosure to memo, Rostow to Planning Group members, 17 April 1963. Document 2a. Africa General, 4/63. Countries: Box 3. National Security Files. NSF-JFKL.
152. Memo of conversation, Kissinger, Botha, and Scowcroft, 15 April 1976. Document 3. April 15, 1976—Kissinger, South African Ambassador R.F. Botha. Memoranda of conversations, 1973–1977: Box 19. NSAF-GRFL. See also memo of conversation, Kissinger, Botha, and Scowcroft, 14 May 1976. May 14, 1976—Kissinger, South African Ambassador R.F. Botha. Memoranda of conversations, 1973–1977: Box 19. NSAF-GRFL.
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6 The Carter Administration

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5. See, for example, U.S. Congress. House. Committee on International Relations. Subcommittee on Africa. *United States policy toward southern Africa: hearing...* [95th Congress, 1st session: March 1977]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1978; U.S. Congress. House. Committee on International Relations. Subcommittee on Africa, and Subcommittee on International Organizations. *United States-South African relations: South Africa's visa policy: hearing* [95th Congress, 1st session: May 1977]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1978; U.S. Congress. House. Committee on International Relations. Subcommittee on Africa. *United States-South Africa relations: internal change in South Africa: hearing...* [95th Congress, 1st session: June 1977]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1978; U.S. Congress. House. Committee on International Relations. Subcommittee on Africa. *United States-South Africa relations: nuclear cooperation: hearings...* [95th Congress, 1st session: June and July 1977]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1978; U.S. Congress. House. Committee on International Relations. Subcommittee on Africa, and Subcommittee on International Economic Policy and Trade. *United States private investment in South Africa: hearings...* [95th Congress, 2nd session: June, July, August, and September 1978]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1978; U.S. Congress. House. Committee on International Relations. Subcommittee on Africa. *United States-South Africa relations: arms embargo implementation: hearings...* [95th Congress, 1st session: July 1977]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1978; U.S. Congress. House. Committee on

- International Relations. Subcommittee on Africa, and Subcommittee on International Organizations. *United States policy toward South Africa: hearing...* [95th Congress, 2nd session: January 1978]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1978; U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs. Subcommittee on International Trade, Investment, and Monetary Policy. *Export-Import Bank and trade with South Africa: hearing...* [95th Congress, 2nd session: February 1978]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1978; U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations. Subcommittee on African Affairs. *Conditions in South Africa: hearing...* [95th Congress, 2nd session: February 1978]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1978; U.S. Congress. House of Representative. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Africa. *Current situation in South Africa: hearing...* [96th Congress, 1st session: September 1979]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1979; U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittees on International Economic Policy and Trade, on Africa, and on International Organizations. *U.S. Policy toward South Africa: hearings...* [96th Congress, 2nd session: April, May, and June 1980]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1980; and U.S. Congress. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Africa. *Labor situation in South Africa—fall 1980: hearing...* [96th Congress, 2nd session: November 1980]. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1981.
6. See, for example, letter, Diggs and Mitchell to Brzezinski, 13 April 1978. CO141-executive. Subject File: Box CO53. WHCF-JCL.
 7. See, for example, HR 12463/HR 12464 (introduced by Solarz, 1 May 1978), HR 13273 (introduced by Diggs, 23 June 1978), and HR 13262 (introduced by Bingham, et al., 22 June 1978).
 8. Section 2(B) (9) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 as amended (Public Law 95–143).
 9. See, New lobby of blacks will seek to influence U.S. policy in Africa. *Washington Post*. 22 April 1978. A9.
 10. NAACP Press Release, 1 June 1978. Cited in Milfred C. Fierce, Black and white American opinions towards South Africa. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 1982, 20(4), 680.
 11. Polaroid withdrew from the South African market as it believed that its partner in the Republic, Frank and Hirsch, had not “fully conformed” to an understanding that Polaroid products would not be sold to the South African government. Polaroid press release, 22 November 1977. Polaroid Corporation Archives, Cambridge, MA. Cited in Eric J. Morgan, The world is watching: Polaroid and South Africa. *Enterprise and Society*. 2006, 7(3), 545.
 12. Of the approximate 300 U.S. companies operating in South Africa, 19 of these had apartheid-related shareholder resolutions tabled at their AGMs in 1976, 28 in 1977, and 33 in 1978. Thomas N. Gladwin and Ingo Walter, *Multinationals under fire: lessons in the management of conflict*. New York: John Wiley, 1980. 158–160.
 13. Donald R. Culverson, *Contesting apartheid: U.S. activism, 1960–1987*. Boulder: Westview, 1999. 106.
 14. Lake, *Caution and concern*; and Donald F. McHenry, *United States firms in South Africa: study project on external investment in South Africa and Namibia*. Bloomington: African Studies Program, Indiana University, 1975.
 15. David B. Ottaway, Carter arrives in Nigeria on state visit. *Washington Post*. 1 April 1978. A1. Prior to Carter’s state visit, Franklin D. Roosevelt made an informal trip to Liberia on 26–27 January 1943, where he met President Edwin Barclay. FDR was en route from the Allies’ Casablanca Conference of 14–24 January 1943.

16. Address of President Jimmy Carter before the United States Naval Academy, Commencement Exercises, Annapolis, 7 June 1978. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=30915&st=annapolis&st1=> [Accessed: 26 November 2007]
17. Presidential news conference, 15 April 1977. *DSB*. 1977, 76(1976), 459.
18. See, for example, Andrew J. DeRoche, *Andrew Young: civil rights ambassador*. Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2003. 76–91.
19. See Cyrus Vance, *Hard choices: critical years in America's foreign policy*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983. 256–313.
20. Presidential Review Memorandum 4 concerning the region was issued following: PRM1 on Panama; PRM2 on the SALT negotiations; and PRM3 on the Middle East. Presidential Review Memorandum/NSC 4 *South Africa and Rhodesian negotiations*, 21 January 1977. <http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.org/documents/prmemorandums/prm04.pdf> [Accessed: 20 November 2007]. Presidential Directive 5 on southern Africa was issued following: PD1 *Establishment of Presidential Review and Directive Series/NSC*; PD2 *The National Security Council System*; PD3 *Disposition of National Security Decision Memoranda*; and PD4 *The law of the sea policy review re PRM/NSC 18*. Presidential Directive/NSC 5 *Southern Africa*, 9 March 1977. <http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.org/documents/pddirectives/pd05.pdf> [Accessed: 20 November 2007].
21. Presidential Directive/NSC 5 *Southern Africa*, 9 March 1977.
22. Vance. *Hard choices*. 257.
23. Letter, Vorster to Carter, 23 March 1977. Document 1. Southern Africa (3/77–4/77). Geographic File: Box 14. Brzezinski Collection. JCL.
24. Letter, Carter to Vorster, 8 April 1977. Document 13. Southern Africa (3/77–4/77). Geographic File: Box 14. Brzezinski Collection. JCL.
25. Memo, Bowdler to State, 19 April 1977. Document 19. Southern Africa (3/77–4/77). Geographic File: Box 14. Brzezinski Collection. JCL; and enclosure to memo, Mondale to Vance, Young, and Brzezinski, 4 April 1977. Document 10a. Southern Africa (3/77–4/77). Geographic File: Box 14. Brzezinski Collection. JCL.
26. *Issues paper*, 4 April 1977. 18. Enclosure to memo, Mondale to Vance, Young, and Brzezinski, 4 April 1977. Document 10a. Southern Africa (3/77–4/77). Geographic File: Box 14. Brzezinski Collection. JCL.
27. Address published in Donald F. McHenry, Policy alternatives in southern Africa. *Worldview*. 1978, June, 35.
28. Vice President Walter Mondale's news conference, Vienna, 20 May 1977. *DSB*. 1977, 76(1982), 665.
29. Recounting his understanding of the Vienna Talks, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Moose, when asked if Mondale made any specific demands at this summit, replied: "He did not; no. He did not say, if you do not do A, B, and C, we will take actions 1, 2, 3 and 4. No; it was not meant in that way. That was not the nature of the exchange . . ." Statement of Richard M. Moose, before the House Subcommittees on Africa, and on International Economic Policy and Trade, 10 August 1978. U.S. Congress. *United States private investment in South Africa: hearings*. . . 185.
30. *Issues paper*, 4 April 1977. 2. Enclosure to memo, Mondale to Vance, Young, and Brzezinski, 4 April 1977. Document 10a. Southern Africa (3/77–4/77). Geographic File: Box 14. Brzezinski Collection. JCL.
31. See, for example, address of Richard M. Moose before the Black Studies Program, Pennsylvania State University, 13 October 1980. *DSB*. 1981, 81(2046), 8.
32. Vice President Walter Mondale's news conference, Vienna, 20 May 1977. *DSB*. 1977, 76(1982), 665.

33. Memo, Mondale to Carter, 8 April 1977. 2. Document 14. Southern Africa (3/77–4/77). Geographic File: Box 14. Brzezinski Collection. JCL.
34. Mondale. *Hard choices*. 265.
35. Address of Cyrus Vance before the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, St. Louis, 1 July 1977. *DSB*. 1977, 77(1989), 169 Vance before a closed session of the senate Subcommittee on African Affairs, 12 May 1978. *DSB*. 1978, 78 (2016), 30.; statement of William Dunfey before the U.N. General Assembly, 8 November 1979. *DSB*. 1980, 80(2037), 67; and statement of Richard Moose before the Black Studies Program, Pennsylvania State university, 13 October 1980. *DSB*. 1981, 81(2046), 8. See also address of Cyrus Vance before the U.S. Jaycees, Atlantic City, 20 June 1978. *DSB*. 1978, 78(2017), 11.
36. Cable, U.S. Embassy-Vienna to State, 20 May 1977. Facsimile published in Mokoena, ed. *Declassified history*. Document 43.
37. Mondale. *Hard choices*. 265.
38. Vice President Walter Mondale's news conference, Vienna, 20 May 1977. *DSB*. 1977, 76(1982), 665.
39. George W. Ball, Asking for trouble in South Africa. *Atlantic Monthly*. 1977, October, 43–51.
40. Testimony of Richard Moose before the House Subcommittees on International Economic Policy and Trade, on Africa, and on International Organizations, 30 April 1980. U.S. Congress. *U.S. policy toward South Africa: hearings...*6. In terms of the backtracking, President Carter, in June 1977, stated, "We don't feel an inclination to intrude into their internal policies, but we are committed as a nation to having equality of treatment of citizens." President Carter interviewed by members of the Magazine Publishers Association, 10 June 1977. *DSB*. 1977, 77(1985), 47. Richard Moose, when asked in 1980 congressional hearings about whether the administration supported one person, one vote, replied: "We have never been that specific . . .," any final settlement "is going to have to be something that is acceptable and satisfactory to all the people of South Africa and therefore they ought to make the final decision." Testimony of Richard Moose before the House Subcommittees on International Economic Policy and Trade, on Africa, and on International Organizations, 30 April 1980. U.S. Congress. *U.S. policy toward South Africa: hearings...*15.
41. Address by President Jimmy Carter at Commencement Exercises, University of Notre Dame, 22 May 1977. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=7552> [Accessed: 19 November 2007].
42. Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and principle: memoirs of the national security advisor 1977–1981*. New York: Farrar Starus Giroux, 1983. 140.
43. Statement of Philip C. Habib before House Subcommittee on Africa, 3 March 1977. U.S. Congress. *United States policy toward southern Africa: hearing...*3.
44. Draft "Declaration on Southern Africa", October 1977. This document gained the support of Western members of the United Nations, but failed to be adopted by the Security Council due to opposition over this Declaration suggesting that members should work "constructively" with Pretoria. The draft resolution is reproduced in Colin Legum, ed. *Africa contemporary record: annual survey and documents 1977–1978*. New York: Africana, 1979. B871–B872.
45. Statement of Patricia M. Derian, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, before the House Subcommittees on Africa, and International Organizations, 13 May 1980. U.S. Congress. *U.S. policy toward South Africa: hearings...* 266; statement of Richard Moose before the Black Studies

- Program, Pennsylvania State University, 13 October 1980. *DSB*. 1981, 81(2046), 8; and Statement of James F. Leonard before the U.N. General Assembly, 22 November 1979. *DSB*. 1979, 79(2023), 61.
46. Remarks of Andrew Young during an Associated Press interview, 14 April 1977. South African scores latest Young remark. *Washington Post*. 18 April 1977. A9. Young was immediately “corrected” by the State Department, and the South African government was advised that the ambassador’s comments did not constitute official U.S. policy. Graham Hovey, Young sets off a furor by calling South Africa regime “illegitimate.” *New York Times*. 16 April 1977. 1 and 4; and remarks of Andrew Young before employees of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 7 November 1977. Young says S. African premier is “over the hill intellectually.” *Washington Post*. 8 November 1977. A14.
 47. State disputes Young’s Angola remark. *Washington Post*. 3 February 1977. A1.
 48. Statement of Andrew Young before the U.N. International Conference in Support of the Peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia, Maputo, 19 May 1977. *DSB*. 1977, 77(1985), 55.
 49. Statement by Andrew Young before the United Nations World Conference for Action Against Apartheid, Lagos, 22–26 August 1977. *DSB*. 1977, 77(1997), 448.
 50. Testimony of Richard Moose before the House Subcommittees on International Economic Policy and Trade, on Africa, and on International Organizations, 30 April 1980. U.S. Congress. *U.S. policy toward South Africa: hearings...*13.
 51. Address by William E. Schauffele, the outgoing Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, before American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 16 April 1977. *DSB*. 1977, 76(1976), 468. See also address of Cyrus Vance before the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, St. Louis, 1 July 1977. *DSB*. 1977, 77(1989), 169.
 52. Cable, Vance to Embassy-Pretoria, 16 July 1979. CO141-executive. Subject File: Box CO54. WHCF-JCL.
 53. Statement of Herbert K. Reis before the U.N. Security Council, 21 September 1979. *DSB*. 1979, 79(2033), 59.
 54. Statement of Philip C. Habib before House Subcommittee on Africa, 3 March 1977. U.S. Congress. *United States policy toward southern Africa: hearing...*6.
 55. Statement of Donald C. Jamieson before the U.N. General Assembly ninth special session on Namibia, 25 April 1978. *DSB*. 1978, 78(2015), 50–54.
 56. Address by William E. Schauffele before American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 16 April 1977. *DSB*. 1977, 76(1976), 467. This was the demand, despite Ambassador R.F. Botha telling Brzezinski that Pretoria was unwilling to “turn the territory over to SWAPO.” Memo of conversation, Botha and Brzezinski, 28 January 1977. Document 3. Memcons: Brzezinski 1–9/77. Subject File: Box 33. (7) National Security Advisor—Brzezinski Materials. Staff Office Files. JCL.
 57. U.N. Security Council resolution 435(1978), 29 September 1978.
 58. U.N. General Assembly resolution 3111(XXVIII), 12 December 1973.
 59. Memo, Western Contact Group to Vorster, 7 April 1977. Referred to in statement of Donald C. Jamieson before the U.N. General Assembly, 25 April 1978. U.S. Department of State. Bureau of Public Affairs. Office of the Historian. *American foreign policy: basic documents, 1977–1980*. Washington DC: GPO, 1983. Document 634.
 60. President Carter’s televised question-and-answer session with California residents, Los Angeles, 17 May 1977. *DSB*. 1977, 76(1981), 627.

61. See U.N. Security Council resolution 439 (1978), 13 November 1978; and address of Donald F. McHenry before House Subcommittee on Africa, 7 May 1979. U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Africa. *The current situation in Namibia: hearing...*11.
62. Address by William E. Schaufele before American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 16 April 1977. DSB. 1977, 76(1976), 469; statement of Richard Moose before the Black Studies Program, Pennsylvania State University, 13 October 1980. DSB. 1981, 81(2046), 8; Testimony of Richard Moose before the House Subcommittees on International Economic Policy and Trade, on Africa, and on International Organizations, 30 April 1980. U.S. Congress. *U.S. Policy toward South Africa: hearings...*35–37; and Address of Anthony Lake before the Conference on U.S. Foreign Policy in Africa, San Francisco, 31 October 1978. DSB. 1979, 79(2022), 19.
63. Bernard Gwertzman, U.S. recalls envoy from South Africa for consultations. *New York Times*. 22 October 1977. 1 and 8; and U.N. Security Council resolution 417 (1977), 31 October 1977.
64. Robin Wright, Blacks sing, call for “power” at South African’s funeral. *Washington Post*. 26 September 1977. A1; and Pranay Gupte, South African leader eulogized at U.N. as symbol of black hope. *New York Times*. 24 September 1977. 3.
65. Statement and Moose’s comment cited in Susanna McBee, Shock and horror expressed by U.S. *Washington Post*. 3 December 1977. 1.
66. In terms of public channels see, for instance, Ibid; statement of Donald McHenry before the U.N. Security Council, 13 June 1980. DSB. 1980, 80(2042), 62; and U.N. Security Council resolution 473 (1980), 13 June 1980. For an example of a private rebuke, see memo of conversation, Brzezinski, Richardson, Fourie, and Sole, 11 November 1977. Document 3. Memcons: Brzezinski 10/77–8/78. Subject File: Box 33. (7) National Security Advisor—Brzezinski Materials. Staff Office Files. JCL.
67. Julius K. Nyerere, America and southern Africa. *Foreign Affairs*. 1977, 55(4), 675.
68. Address by President Jimmy Carter at Commencement Exercises, University of Notre Dame, Indiana, 22 May 1977. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=7552> [Accessed: 19 November 2007].
69. Ibid.
70. Address of Cyrus Vance before the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, St. Louis, 1 July 1977. DSB. 1977, 77(1989), 166.
71. Kramer reported that the tracking station had been consigned to a “caretaker status.” Statement of Franklin D. Kramer, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Defense, before the House Subcommittees on International Economic Policy and Trade, on Africa, and on International Organizations, 30 April 1980. U.S. Congress. *U.S. Policy toward South Africa: hearings...*8.
72. Memo of conversation, Botha and Brzezinski, 28 January 1977. Document 3. Memcons: Brzezinski 1–9/77. Subject File: Box 33. (7) National Security Advisor—Brzezinski Materials. Staff Office Files. JCL.
73. In a television interview, Young stated of the Cuban troops in Angola that “there’s a sense in which the Cuban’s bring a certain stability and order.” Andrew Young interviewed by Dan Rather on the CBS program *Who’s Who* broadcast 25 January 1977. IT 86–27:1/20/77–6/30/77. Subject File: Box IT10. WHCF-JCL. The State Department later clarified Young’s comments, making it known that “neither Ambassador Young nor the Secretary condones the presence of Cuban troops in Angola.” Young personally responded to this clarification by stating that he

- acted as “a kind of point man” for the administration, taking positions ahead of official policy in order to find a way forward. Cited in State disputes Young’s Angola remark. *Washington Post*. 3 February 1977. A1 and A16.
74. U.N. Security Council resolution 418 (1977), 4 November 1977.
 75. Graham Hovey, U.S. is said to agree to arms sanctions against South Africa. *New York Times*. 26 October 1977. A1 and A7; Susanna McBee and Harold J. Logan. U.S. to back arms ban on South Africa. *Washington Post*. 27 October 1977. A1; Kathleen Teltsch, U.N. Council orders arms-sale sanctions against South Africa. *New York Times*. 5 November 1977. 1 and 7; and President Jimmy Carter’s press conference, Washington DC, 28 October 1977. <http://www.presidency.ucs.edu/ws/index.php?pid=6863&st=south+africa&st1=> [Accessed: 21 November 2007]. See also memo, Aaron to Mondale, Vance, and Brown, 26 September 1977. Document 2e. Meetings: PRC 41–9/20/77. Subject File: Box 24. Brzezinski Collection. JCL.
 76. Rhodesia was the only other country, at this time, to have been subject to Chapter VII sanctions. Rhodesia, however, was deemed an “illegal” state by the United Nations, and was thus not a member of this organization.
 77. Statement of Stanley J. Marcus, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Domestic Commerce, before the House Subcommittee on Africa, 20 July 1977. U.S. Congress. *United States-South Africa relations: arms embargo implementation: hearings...*47.
 78. McBee and Logan, U.S. to back arms ban on South Africa. *Washington Post*. 27 October 1977. A1; and cable, Vance to all African diplomatic posts, 5 November 1977. Facsimile published in Mokoena, ed. *Declassified history*. Document 9.
 79. Mokoena, ed. *Declassified history*. Document 9; and Susanna McBee, Further sanctions seen against South Africa. *Washington Post*. 28 October 1977. A8. The administration, at this time, made it known that it was still considering the sale of two further gray area items: spare parts for executive-type jets and a computer system used in the construction of naval vessels.
 80. Title 15, *Code of federal regulations*: §385.4(a) (2). [1979]. Original emphasis.
 81. See, for example, comments of A.J.A. Roux at seminar, Johannesburg, October 1976. Cited in Jim S.Hoagland, Africa, with U.S. aid, near A. bomb. *Washington Post*. 16 February 1977. A12.
 82. Richard Bissell provides a good account of these incidents. Bissell, *South Africa and the United States*. 103–116.
 83. CIA. Directorate of Intelligence. Office of Scientific Intelligence. *South African enrichment program* [SI 77–10058]. August 1977. CIA-FOIA. [Accessed: 1 December 2007]; and memo, Parmenter to National Foreign Intelligence Board, 18 August 1977. CIA-FOIA. [Accessed: 1 December 2007]. See also Statement of Philip C. Habib before House Subcommittee on Africa, 3 March 1977. U.S. Congress. *United States policy toward southern Africa: hearing...*31.
 84. Prime Minister Vorster had assured President Carter at the time of the Kalahari incident that South Africa had no intention to explode any nuclear device. Comments of President Carter, news conference, 23 August 1977. DSB. 1977, 77(1995), 376.
 85. See Stumpf, South Africa’s nuclear weapons program. 66–71.
 86. The official investigation into this incident ended with no conclusive evidence. The most likely explanation of the “double flash” involved the satellite concerned registering sunlight reflecting from a meteor. Memo, Brzezinski to Carter, 9 January 1980. Document 11a. South Africa. Vertical File: Box 111. JCL.

87. See Richard Burt, U.S. tells South Africa to accept atomic curbs or face fuel cutoff. *New York Times*. 20 December 1977. A10; and statement of Joseph Nye before the House Subcommittee on Africa, 12 July 1977. U.S. Congress. *United States-South Africa relations: nuclear cooperation: hearings...*57–58.
88. Draft letter from President Carter to Tarnoff Fraser. Enclosure to memo, Tarnhof to Brzezinski, 3 June 1977. Document 4. CO141-executive. Subject File: CO54. WHCF-JCL.
89. Benard Gwertzman, Young rejects ban on atom fuel sale to South Africans. *New York Times*. 31 October 1977. 13. By contrast, South Africa officials were asking their U.S. counterparts at this time why should they cooperate over the NPT given the broader sanctions that were being imposed. Memo of conversation, Brzezinski, Richardson, Fourie, and Sole, 11 November 1977. Document 3. Memcons: Brzezinski 10/77–8/78. Subject File: Box 33. (7) National Security Advisor—Brzezinski Materials. Staff Office Files. JCL.
90. Milton R. Benjamin, U.S. S. Africa in “sensitive” nuclear talks. *Washington Post*. 29 June 1978. A20.
91. Graham Hovey, U.S. returns South Africa funds. *New York Times*. 13 November 1978. A3.
92. Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 (Public Law 95–242).
93. Michael T. Kaufman, Nuclear parley bars South Africa. *New York Times*. 6 December 1979. A14.
94. See, for example, statement of Richard M. Moose before the House Subcommittees on Africa, and on International Economic Policy and Trade, 10 August 1978. U.S. Congress. *United States private investment in South Africa: hearings...*171.
95. See U.S. Congress. *Export-Import Bank and trade with South Africa: hearing...*2.
96. Section 2(B) (9) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 as amended (Public Law 95–143).
97. See Anthony N. Vance, The Export-Import Bank of the United States and South Africa: the effects of the Evans amendment. *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law*. 1984, 17(4), 801–885.
98. See Mary Russell, Ex-Im Bank curb for S. Africa voted. *Washington Post*. 3 June 1978. A6; and Widening the attack on apartheid. *Washington Post*. 4 May 1978. A26.
99. U.N. Security Council draft resolutions S/12310, 31 October 1977; S/12311, 31 October 1977; and S/12312, 31 October 1977.
100. See, for example, statement of Stanley J. Marcuss before the House Subcommittees on Africa, and on International Economic Policy and Trade, 10 August 1978. U.S. Congress. *United States private investment in South Africa: hearings...*172–178. A *laager* is the Afrikaans term for a defensive encampment encircled by wagons. These were deployed by nineteenth-century treks into the South African hinterland.
101. Remarks of Andrew Young before employees of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 7 November 1977. Cited in Young says S. African premier is “over the hill intellectually.” *Washington Post*. 8 November 1977. A14.
102. Statement of Richard M. Moose before the House Subcommittees on Africa, and on International Economic Policy and Trade, 10 August 1978. U.S. Congress. *United States private investment in South Africa: hearings...*167.
103. Carter speaks on SA. *Financial Mail*. (Johannesburg). 1976, 62(6), 501.
104. Statement of Andrew Young before South African businessmen, Johannesburg, 21 May 1977. U.S. Mission to United Nations press release USUN77, 27 May

1977. Cited in Edgar Lockwood, *The future of the Carter policy toward southern Africa. Issue*. 1977, 7(4), 12.
105. State Department written responses to supplementary questions submitted by the House Subcommittees on International Economic Policy and Trade, on Africa, and on International Organizations, 1980. U.S. Congress. *U.S. policy toward South Africa: hearings...*770.
 106. Letter, Bennett to Bonker, 2 May 1977. Reproduced in U.S. Congress. *United States policy toward southern Africa: hearing...*46.
 107. In terms of the administration endorsing the Sullivan Principles, see statement of Richard M. Moose before the House Subcommittees on Africa, and on International Economic Policy and Trade, 10 August 1978. U.S. Congress. *United States private investment in South Africa: hearings...*167; and testimony of Richard Moose before the House Subcommittees on International Economic Policy and Trade, on Africa, and on International Organizations, 30 April 1980. U.S. Congress. *U.S. policy toward South Africa: hearings...*16.
 108. U.S. firms to fight bias in S. Africa. *Washington Post*. 3 March 1977. D14. The original 12 signatories were: American Cyanamid, Burroughs, Caltex Petroleum, Citicorp, Ford Motor, General Motors, IBM, International Harvester, Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing, Mobil Oil, Otis Elevator, and Union Carbide.
 109. Address by William E. Schaufele before American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 16 April 1977. DSB. 1977, 76(1976), 470.
 110. U.S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. *Statistical abstract of the United States 1985*. Washington DC: U.S. GPO, 1984; and U.S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of Economic Analysis. *Survey of Current Business*. 1977, 57(8), 44 and 50; and 1984, 64(11), 24–25.
 111. Hull, *American enterprise in South Africa*. 312.
 112. Representative Bonker before the House Subcommittees on Africa, and on International Economic Policy and Trade, 10 August 1978. U.S. Congress. *United States private investment in South Africa: hearings...*179.
 113. Testimony of Richard Moose before the House Subcommittees on International Economic Policy and Trade, on Africa, and on International Organizations, 30 April 1980. U.S. Congress. *U.S. policy toward South Africa: hearings...* 7.
 114. Cited in Gavshon, *Crisis in Africa*. 159.
 115. Letter, Diggs and Mitchell to Brzezinski, 13 April 1978. CO141-executive. Subject File: CO53. WHCF-JCL.
 116. Brzezinski. *Power and principle*. 141.
 117. Even as early as April 1978, there was talk of South Africa waiting for the end of Carter administration. See memo, Thornton to Brzezinski, 13 April 1978. Document 1a. Meetings: PRC41: 9/20/77. Subject File: Box 24. Brzezinski Collection. JCL.
 118. See, for instance, Kenneth Adelman, The club of pariahs. *Africa Report*. 1980, 25(6), 8–11.
 119. A spy camera was found in the plane used by the U.S. ambassador to South Africa. The United States responded by stating that it was not uncommon for military attachés to collect photographic intelligence in this manner, and suggested that Pretoria's failure to deal with this issue through diplomatic channels was a consequence of this incident being political in nature. Bernard Gwertzman, U.S. expelling 2 South Africans after ouster of American aides. *New York Times*. 14 April 1979. 1 and 4.

120. Address of Anthony Lake before the Conference on U.S. Foreign Policy in Africa, San Francisco, 31 October 1978. *DSB*. 1979, 79(2022), 20.
121. Draft letter, President Carter to Fraser. Enclosure to memo, Tarnoff to Brzezinski, 3 June 1977. CO141-executive. Subject File: Box CO54. WHCF-JCL.
122. Brzezinski. *Power and principle*. 143.
123. See, for example, Danaher, *The political economy of U.S. policy toward South Africa*. 173–175; and Dickson, *United States foreign policy towards Sub-Saharan Africa*. 112.
124. President Carter's news conference, 15 April 1977. *DSB*. 1977, 76(1976), 459.
125. State Department written responses to supplementary questions submitted by the House Subcommittees on International Economic Policy and Trade, on Africa, and on International Organizations, 1980. U.S. Congress. *U.S. policy toward South Africa: hearings*...746.
126. Richard Moose interviewed by Peter J. Schraeder, 26 June 1989. Cited in Peter J. Schraeder, *United States foreign policy toward Africa: incrementalism, crisis and change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. 308.
127. See, for example, Garrick Uttley, *Globalism or regionalism?: United States policy toward southern Africa*. Adelphi Paper 154. London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1979.
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129. Brzezinski. *Power and principle*. 139–140 and 143.
130. Brzezinski told Zambian diplomats that there was no truth to this *Newsweek* story. Memo of conversation, Chona, Kamana, and Brzezinski, 19 January 1977. Memcons: Brzezinski 1–9/77. Subject File: Box 33. (7) National Security Advisor—Brzezinski Materials. Staff Office Files. JCL.
131. Address of President Jimmy Carter before the United States Naval Academy Address at the Commencement Exercises, Annapolis, 7 June 1978. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=30915&st=annapolis&st1=> [Accessed: 26 November 2008].
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91. Personal interview with Robert Cabelly (personal assistant to Chester Crocker, State Department, 1981–1989), Washington DC, 13 October 1992.
92. Personal interview with Bob Gosende, Washington DC, 14 October 1992.
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99. Personal interview with Chester A. Crocker, Washington DC, 5 October 1992.
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110. Personal interview with Donald Sole, Cape Town, 7 April 1993.
111. Address of Herman W. Nickel before the American Chamber of Commerce in South Africa, Johannesburg, 16 February 1983. *Southern Africa Record*. 1983, 31, 20.
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8 The Reagan Administration, 1984–1986

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9 The Reagan, Bush, and Clinton Administrations

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48. Perkins. *Mr. Ambassador*. 310–316; personal interview with Bob Gosende (Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Embassy, Pretoria, 1981–1986). Washington DC, 14 October 1992; and U.S. envoy at funeral for South African journalist. *New York Times*. 25 January 1988. 1.
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59. Personal telephone interview with Edward Perkins, 30 December 1992.
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63. Personal interview with Robert Cabelly (personal assistant to Chester Crocker, State Department, 1981–1989), Washington DC, 13 October 1992.
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70. Edward Kennedy cited in John Felton, Congress is willing to defer imposing new sanctions. *Congressional Quarterly: Weekly Report*. 1989, 47(40), 2659; and remarks of William H. Gray at the Carnegie Endowment's South African breakfast meeting, Washington DC, 20 March 1990. Cited in Princeton N. Lyman, *Partner to history: the U.S. role in South Africa's transition to democracy*. Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2002. 49.
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